SAINT PETERSBURG

BIRD'S-EYE VIEWS

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"An eagle, looking down at St Petersburg from a high altitude, will notice the unity of the will that has powerfully brought the city to life and will sense the wonder-working builder, whose ideas have been roughly embodied in an inert matter," asserted the writer and historian Nikolai Antsiferov, a recognized connoisseur of Russia's northern capital.

It seems that Antsiferov mentioned an eagle not by chance – St Petersburg has its own "eagle history". Legend has it that when Tsar Peter the Great, the city's founder, shovelled the first clod of earth himself on Hare Island, laying the foundation of a fortress with which the history of St Petersburg began, an eagle sat down on his shoulder. Peter regarded it as a good omen. And it happened so – the city, founded on a marshland and doomed to have a brief term of existence according to predictions because of difficult soils, frequent floods and damp climate, was growing and getting better to turn eventually into one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

It is known that an increase of the vertical point of view results in a growth of emotional impact of any object. If we apply this statement to the northern capital of Russia, the fate of birds seems to be much happier than the destiny of human beings. After all, birds, stars and angels look from heavens at this amazing city with its impeccably verified layout, perfect volumes and faultlessly elegant silhouettes of buildings. And what if we, who have trodden all streets in St Petersburg, rise high, like birds, and undertake an air travel above the city of St Peter?

←
1. View of the central part of the Neva

2. Panoramic view of the Peter and Paul Fortress

3

St Petersburg emerged during the Northern War fought by Russia against Sweden for the originally Russian lands around the Neva and for regaining an access to the Baltic Sea. The place of its birth was Hare Island. On 27 May 1703 Tsar Peter the Great ordered to build a fortress here that later would become the historical centre of St Petersburg, the capital of the Russian Empire for more than two centuries. The citadel was built to a project by the French engineer Joseph Gaspar Lambert and the Tsar actively participated in the work.

The clear-cut volume of the SS Peter and Paul Cathedral, symbolizing Russia's firm position on the Baltic coast, appears steady and imposing from above. It not only dominates the fortress ensemble, but serves, along with St Isaac's Cathedral and the Admiralty, as a reference vertical for the entire city.

The bell-tower of the SS Peter and Paul Cathedral, the city's highest structure (122.5 m), reigns St Petersburg. On bright days its spire shines in sunlight and when the weather is bad, it becomes similar to a golden sword fighting with clouds or rain, reserving a right for victory to itself. On closer examination it is possible to see, how expressive is the figure of an angel crowning the spire with its clothes fluttering in the wind and its reliable wings sparkling in sunshine. In 1991 the angel "descended" to the earth for restoration and now, in a renovated state, it soars over St Petersburg again, blessing the city with the cross and protecting it from misfortunes.

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3, 5. Angel on the spire of the SS Peter and Paul Cathedral

4. The SS Peter and Paul Cathedral. 1712–33. Architect: Domenico Trezzini

6

7

From the altitude of flying birds it is possible to apprehend the perfection of the fortress's plan. Six curtain walls, linked by six bastions, make an impression of an impregnable stronghold. Not without reason the Swedes, from whose incursions the fortress was to protect the city, never dared to storm it.

6. The Peter and Paul Fortress

7. The Peter and Paul Fortress. The Naryshkin Bastion and the Commandant's Landing Stage

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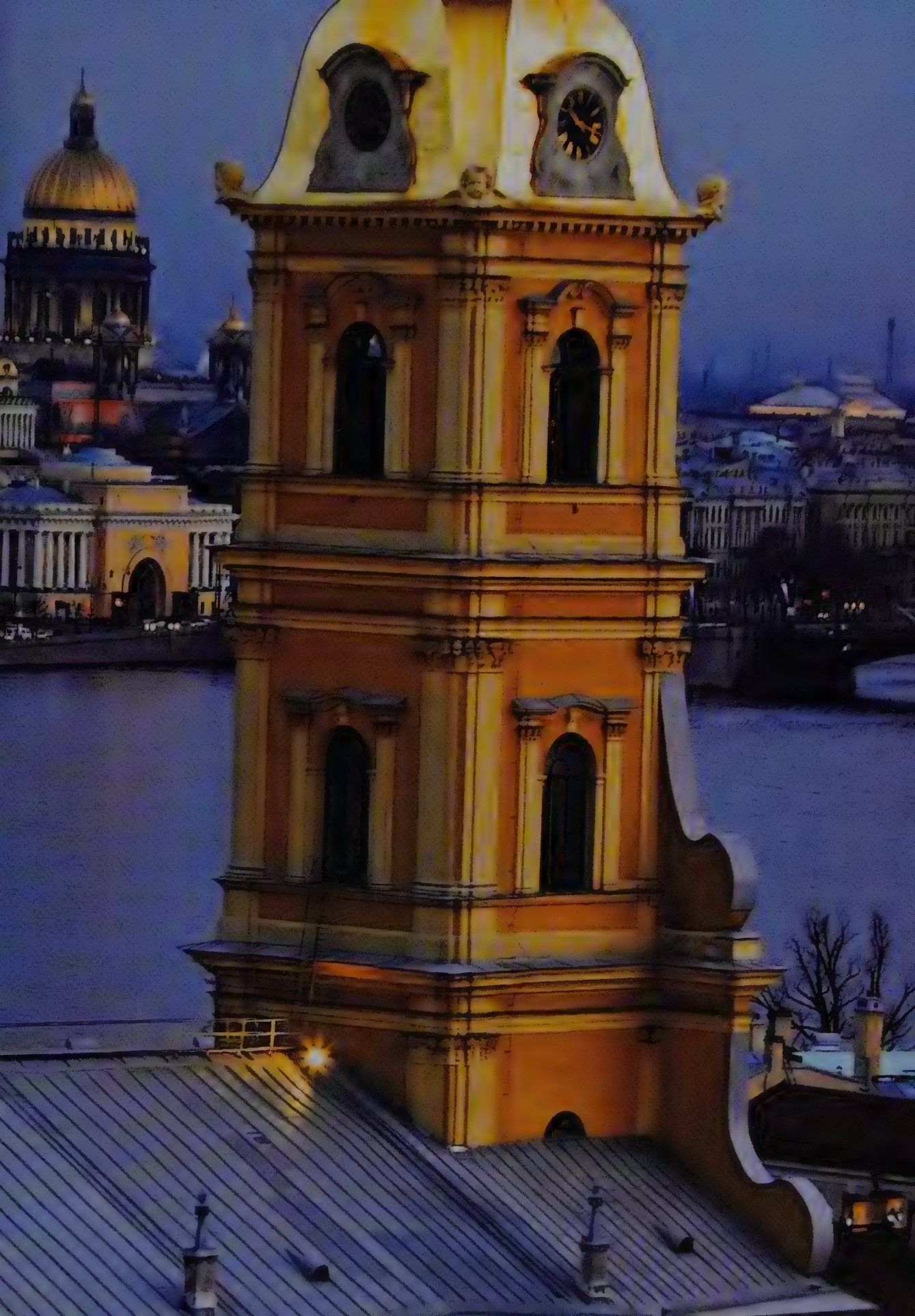
8, 9. View of the Main Admiralty and St Isaac's from the SS Peter and Paul Cathedral



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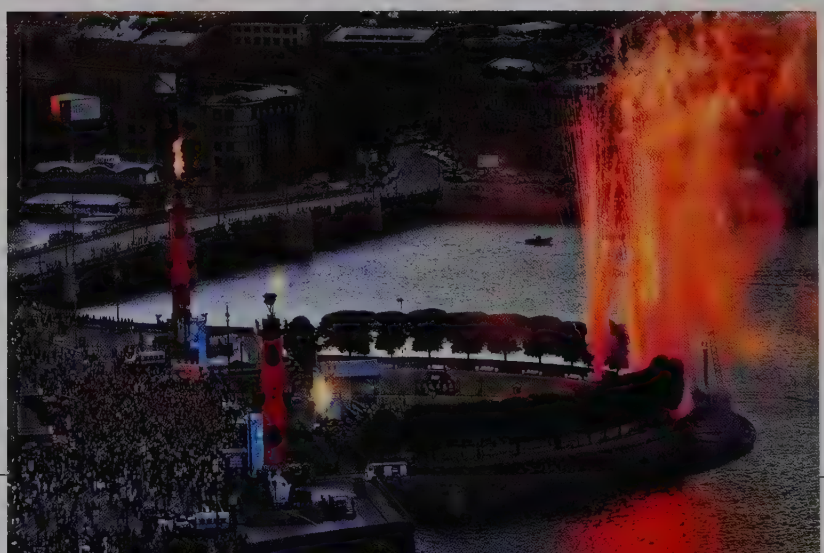

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St Petersburg spreads widely over the banks of the unusually deep Neva flowing into the Gulf of Finland of the Baltic Sea, which opens a way to Europe and further to the Atlantic; the river leads far inland as well. The Neva is not only an important transport thoroughfare, but also a superb highlight of St Petersburg. It is the venue of grand-scale performances with ships, fireworks and laser shows. One of the most favourite holidays of townspeople is "Scarlet Sails", a pageant staged for school graduates on the Neva.

14

10–12. Illumination on the Neva

13. A holiday on the Spit of Vasilyevsky Island

14. Raising of the Palace Bridge

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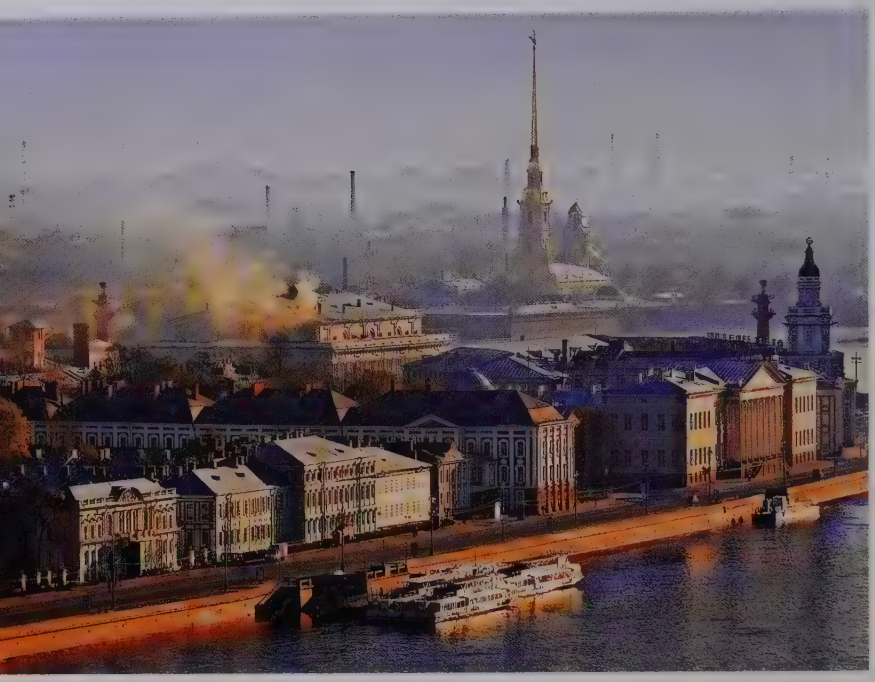
15. Panoramic view of Vasilyevsky Island

17

A schooner with scarlet sails (an allusion to the well-known romantic novel *Scarlet Sails* by Alexander Grin) charges young Petersburgers with energy for their future adult life. St Petersburg is located on forty-two islands. The largest of them is Vasilyevsky Island. The promontory of this island washed by the Large Neva on the left and by the Small Neva on the right, is called the island's "Spit". This spot is one of the most beautiful city landscapes. A fantastic perfection of the Spit ensemble, eulogized by poets, strikes one's imagination. Alexander Dumas wrote that "there is hardly any view in the world that can rival the panorama unfolding before our eyes." He implied the fascinating panorama of the Spit opening from the Trinity Bridge. It appears that the site looks even more perfect from a height. The Spit ensemble dissecting the Neva waters like the prow of a ship dashing in full sail seems to float towards the rising sun. The branches of the Neva embrace it and the entire Vasilyevsky Island before disappearing at the horizon, in the Gulf of Finland. It was on the Spit of Vasilyevsky Island that a grandiose building of the Stock Exchange resembling an ancient temple was erected in the eighteenth century, as well as the Rostral Columns serving as lighthouses. At the same time work on the creation of granite embankments at the Spit was conducted. The magnificent square in front of the Stock Exchange with its geometrically faultless proportions has been formed artificially, by sand filling. Vasilyevsky Island took shape as the St Petersburg centre of science, culture and education. Its "trademark" is the University Embankment,

16. The Spit of Vasilyevsky Island

17. The Spit of Vasilyevsky Island.
The Rostral Column. 1810.
Architect: Jean François Vallin de Thomon



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our "Latin Quarter". The Academy of Sciences, Academy of Arts, Mining Institute and large museums are situated here in close neighbourhood. The embankment keeps memory of many outstanding scientists, writers and artists. Magnificent buildings lining the Neva create a brilliant frame for the embankment and are regally splendid at any season. Pedestrians see merely the frontal part of the architectural ensemble of the embankment, whereas from a height the expressiveness of its architectural solution and an abundance of greenery in courtyards and squares become more clearly seen.

The architects, who designed and built the Academy of Arts, were guided by the tasks of greatness and beauty under the aegis of which the life of academic artists and students was supposed to pass.

21

18. Vasilyevsky Island.
The University Embankment

19. View of the Kunstkammer tower,
a pavilion of the Main Admiralty building
and the dome of the Kazan Cathedral

20. Flying over the Neva...
The University Embankment

21. View of Vasilyevsky Island from the Spit

23

24

From the height of a bird flight the viewer can fully appreciate the greatness of the architects' plans, because unfolded before your eyes is the whole sweep and daring of the architectural project, a perfection of its outlines and an absolute harmony of its proportions.

22, 24. Building of the Academy of Arts. 1764–88. Architects: Vallin de la Mothe, Alexander Kokorinov

23. Panoramic view of the Large Neva

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25. View of the Main Admiralty building (1806–19, architect: Andreyan Zakharov)

26

The Admiralty, the main naval establishment of Russia, was originally created as a shipyard from a drawing by Peter the Great himself. From above the plan of this architectural complex can be clearly discerned: it is designed in the form of the letter U, at the ends of which are pavilions opening towards the Neva. In the centre of the composition is a tower with an arch, topped by a light spire with a weather vane shaped like a three-mast frigate, one of symbols of St Petersburg. The Admiralty was sometimes called the "Northern Star", because it emanates rays like a heavenly body – the three main streets of the city radiating from it. From the altitude at which birds fly seems that the Admiralty "needle" is similar to a magnet that attracts Gorokhovaya Street and Nevsky and Voznesensky Prospekts to itself. The Admiralty – the starting point of the city's main thoroughfares – played an important role in the creation of one of the most imposing ensembles on the left bank of the Neva.

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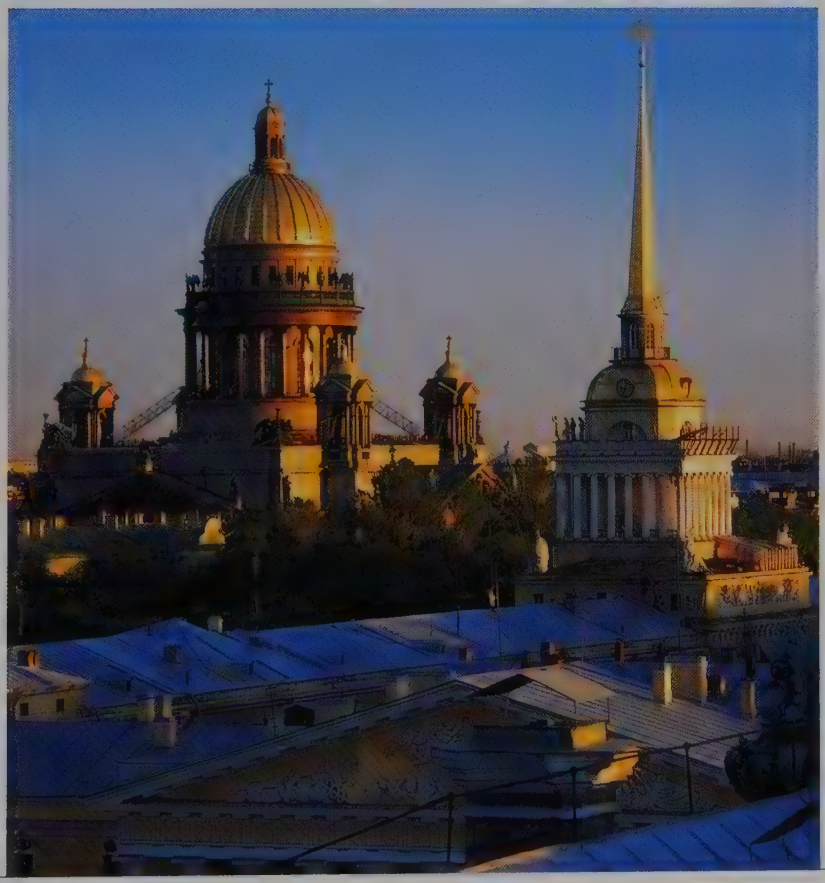

26. Colonnade of the central tower of the Main Admiralty building

27. Ship on the spire of the Main Admiralty building, a symbol of St Petersburg

28. St Isaac's Cathedral and the Main Admiralty building

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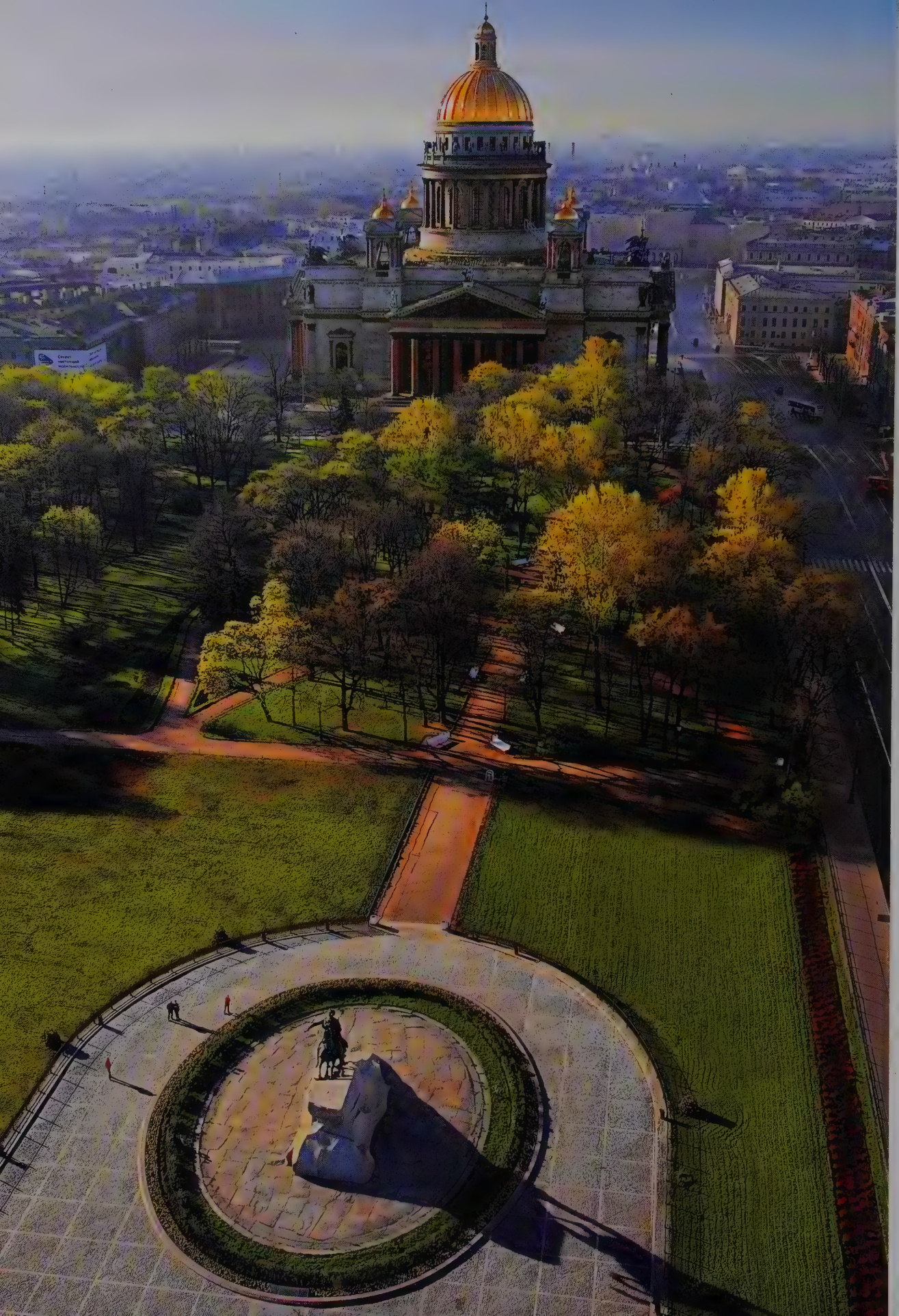
29. St Isaac's Cathedral. 1818–50, architect: Auguste de Montferrand



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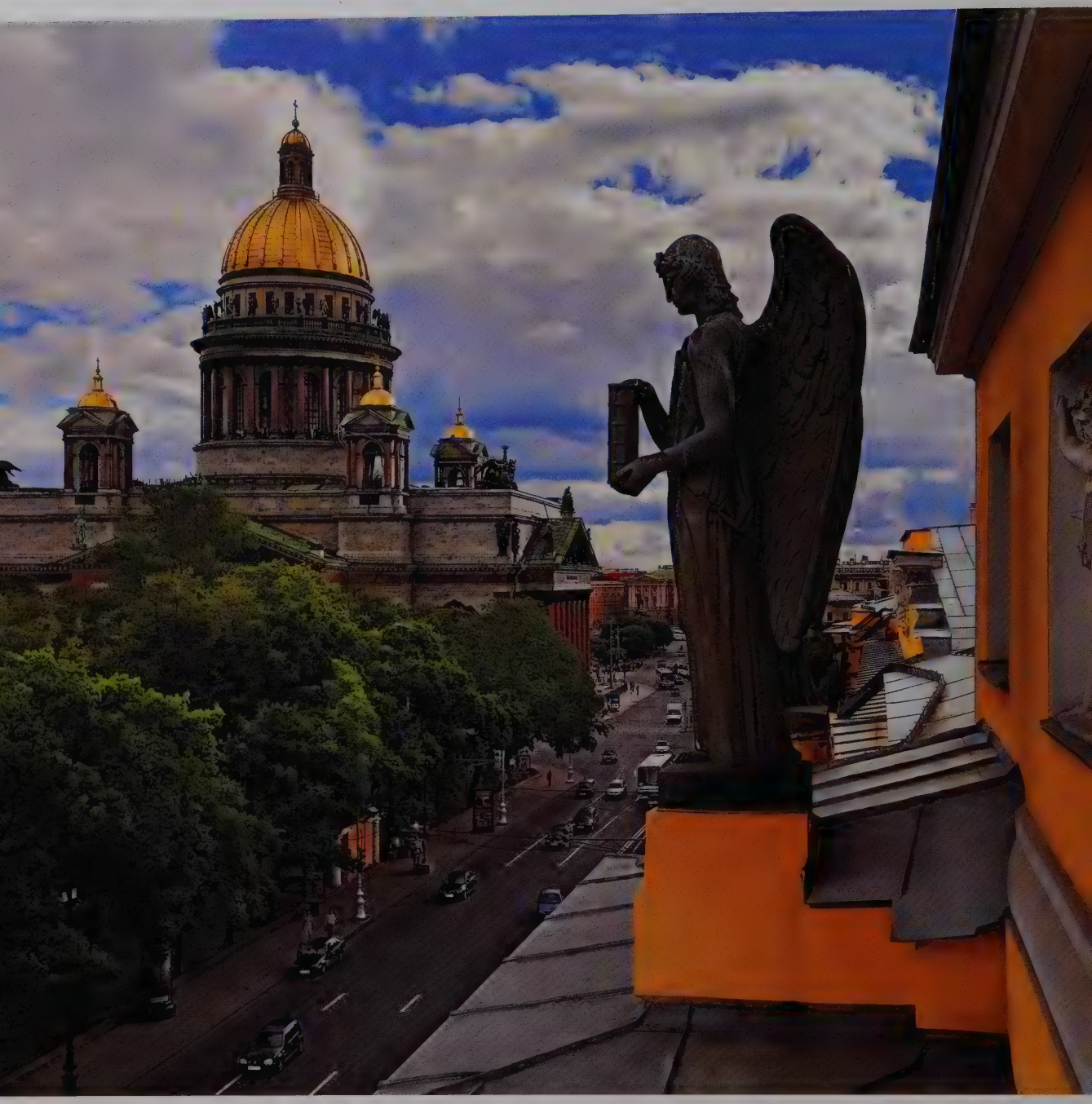
Senate Square, surrounded by Classicist buildings, perfect in style, ranks with the most beautiful landmarks in St Petersburg. In its centre soars the sculptural image of the founder of the northern capital, "the wonder-working builder" (the so-called *Bronze Horseman*). Associated with Peter the Great here are also the buildings of two supreme bodies of the government, the Senate and the Synod, as well as St Isaac's Cathedral overlooking Senate Square with its northern front and named in honour of the saint, on whose name-day the Emperor was born.

30, 31. Senate Square.
Monument to Peter the Great
(the *Bronze Horseman*). 1782.
Sculptor: Etienne Maurice Falconet

32. View of St Isaac's Cathedral, Senate Square and the English Embankment



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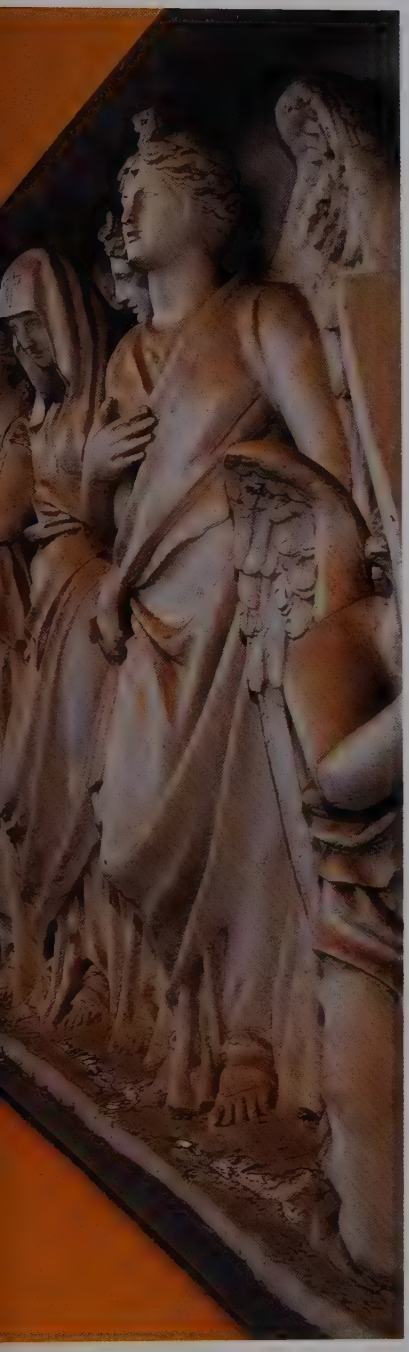
A worthy background for the square or stage, dominated by the figure of Emperor Peter the Great, is St Isaac's Cathedral. It connects Senate Square with St Isaac's Square, which, gradually flowing one into the other, make up a single whole. Such interpenetration of two spatial units, frequent in St Petersburg, is especially visible from above.

St Isaac's, 100 m high and accommodating 12,000 persons, is the biggest cathedral of St Petersburg. Its golden dome is visible from any point in the city. The cathedral was under construction for 40 years, since 1817. For strengthening the ground more than 10,000 piles were driven under its base; the work was incessantly done by 11,000 labourers within a year. The cathedral is highly impressive not only by its size: this giant in a gold cap is at the same time the most magnificently decorated devotional building of St Petersburg. Its walls in granite, porphyry and marble are magnificent, and its majestic granite columns are proportional to the main volume of the building. Arranged around the drum of St Isaac's a dome are angels – winged creatures personifying the heavenly forces protecting the city.



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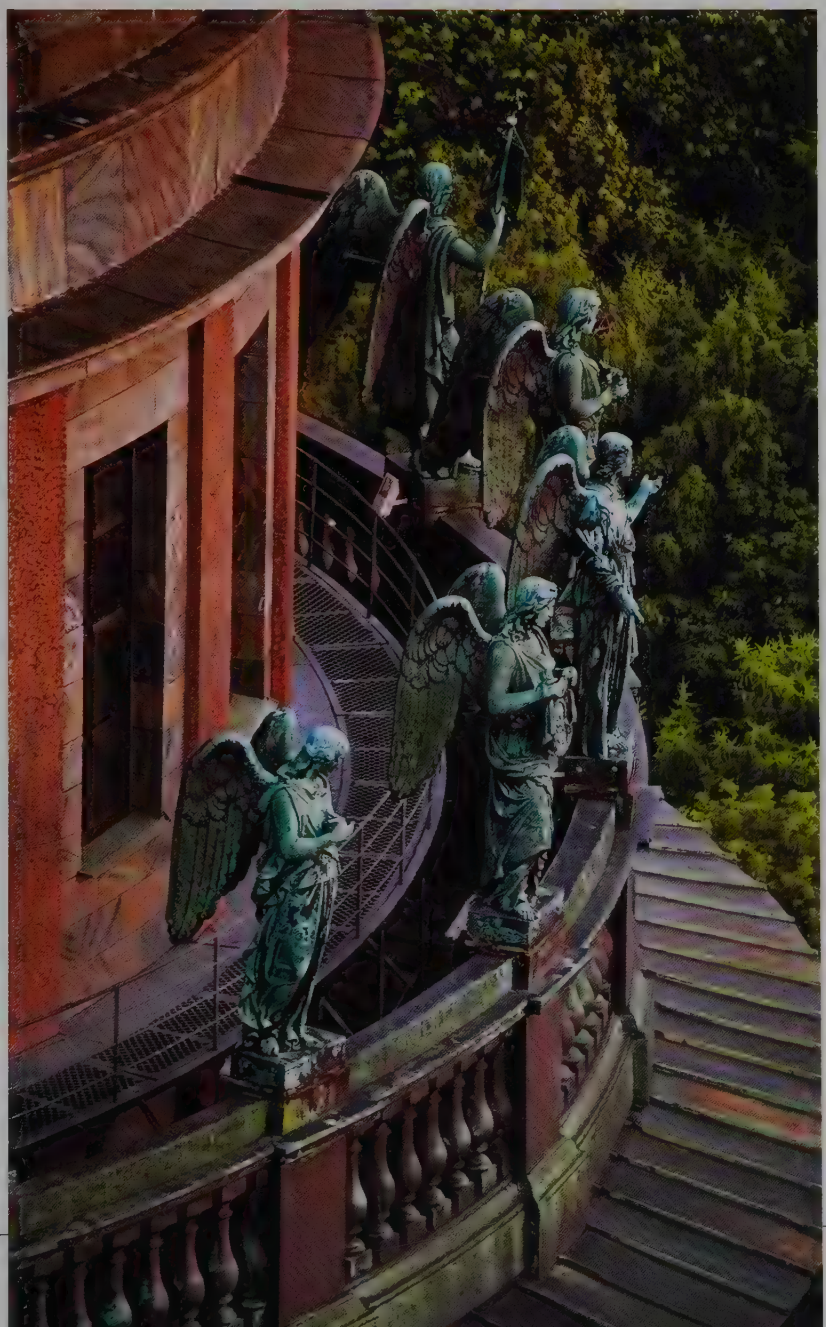
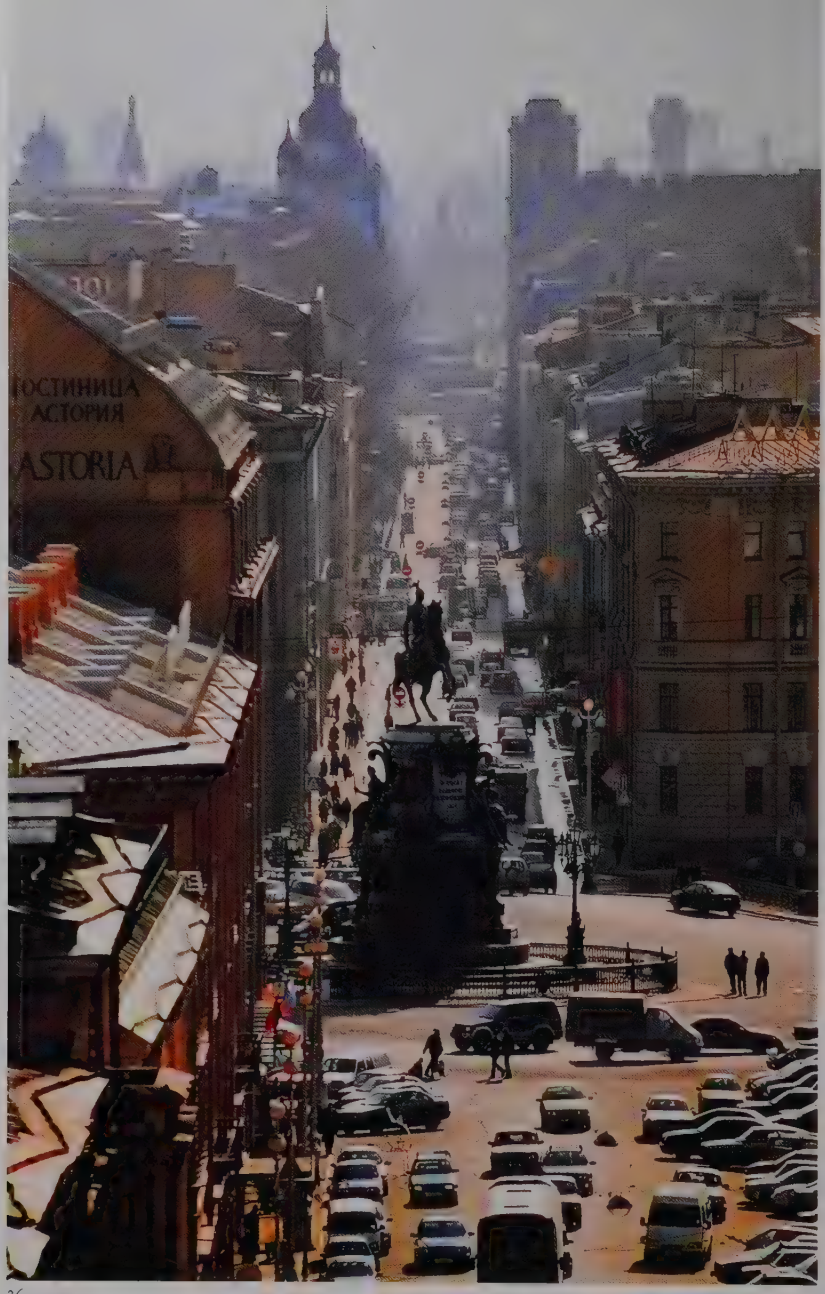


33. View of St Isaac's Cathedral from the Senate and Synod building

34. Bells of St Isaac's belfry

35. Sculpture on the drum of St Isaac's dome



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36. View of St Isaac's Square and Voznesensky Prospekt

37, 38. St Isaac's Square. Monument to Nicholas I (1856–59, sculptor: Peter Klodt) and the Mariinsky Palace (1839–44, architect: Andrei Stackenschneider)

Usually pedestrians do not guess at all that a part of St Isaac's Square is the Blue Bridge, the widest in the city, and this is apparent from a height. In the centre of the space near the bridge stands the monument to Emperor Nicholas I, which was put up on the same axis as the *Bronze Horseman*. This position gave birth to an urban saying: "One Tsar is trying to catch up with the other, but St Isaac's prevents him from doing so." The sense of this saying becomes especially clear when you look at this rivalry from above.

The grandiose St Isaac's Square is framed with a complex of buildings constructed from the eighteenth to early twentieth century. One of predominant structures of the square is the Mariinsky Palace. Emperor Nicholas I presented this truly imperial gift to his favourite daughter Maria for her wedding. Later the edifice housed important official bodies and nowadays is the seat of the city's Legislative Assembly. It is interesting that from above St Isaac's Square with traffic lane markings looks similar to a slate with ruled lines.

40

41

The perfect shape of Palace Square is close to a semicircle with the Winter Palace as its base and the Arch of the General Staff building as its top point. If we compare architecture with stiff music, then Palace Square sounds polyphonically. Baroque "fugues" by Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli (the Winter Palace) are counterbalanced by Carlo Rossi's classical chords (the General Staff building), they are connected into a single whole by Alexander Briullov's simple and clear melody (the Staff of the Guards Corps). Built in different periods and so unlike one another, these buildings became together a fine example of a harmonious union, not infrequent in St Petersburg by the way.

←
39. View of the Winter Palace (1754–62, architect: Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli) and other buildings of a complex of the State Hermitage

40, 41. Palace Square

42. Palace Square. The Alexander Column. 1834. Architect: Auguste de Montferrand, sculptor: Boris Orlowski

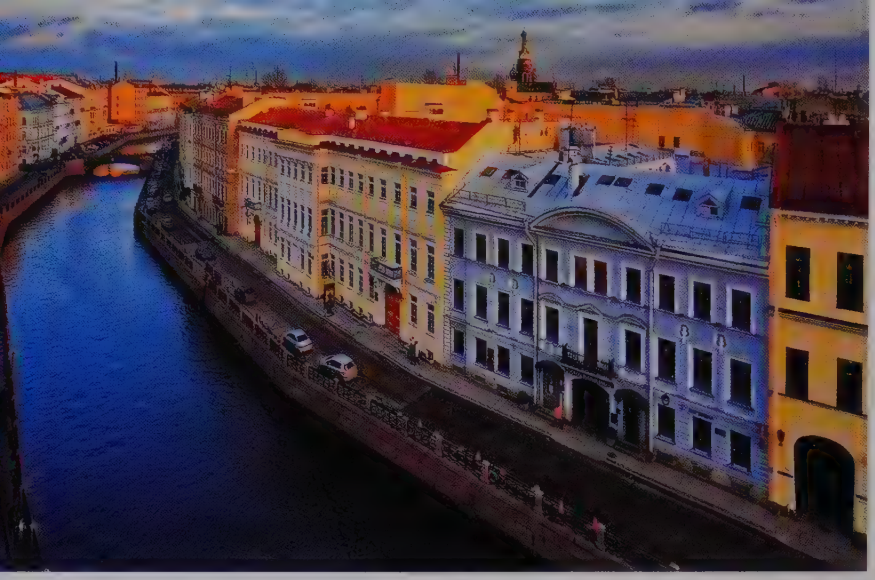
44

45

Looking at the Hermitage from above, the viewer finds out that its structures possess a developed system of courtyards and passages, about which pedestrians even do not guess. It is curious to fly up closer to the Arch of the General Staff building so similar to the triumphal arch of Ancient Rome, to look from above at the decoration of the square, at the world's highest monolithic granite pillar (50 m high and weighing 224 t) – the Alexander Column.

43, 45. The Arch of the General Staff building. The Chariot of Glory. 1828. Sculptors: Vasily Demuth-Malinovsky, Stepan Pimenov

44. Palace Square. The General Staff building. 1819–29. Architect: Carlo Rossi



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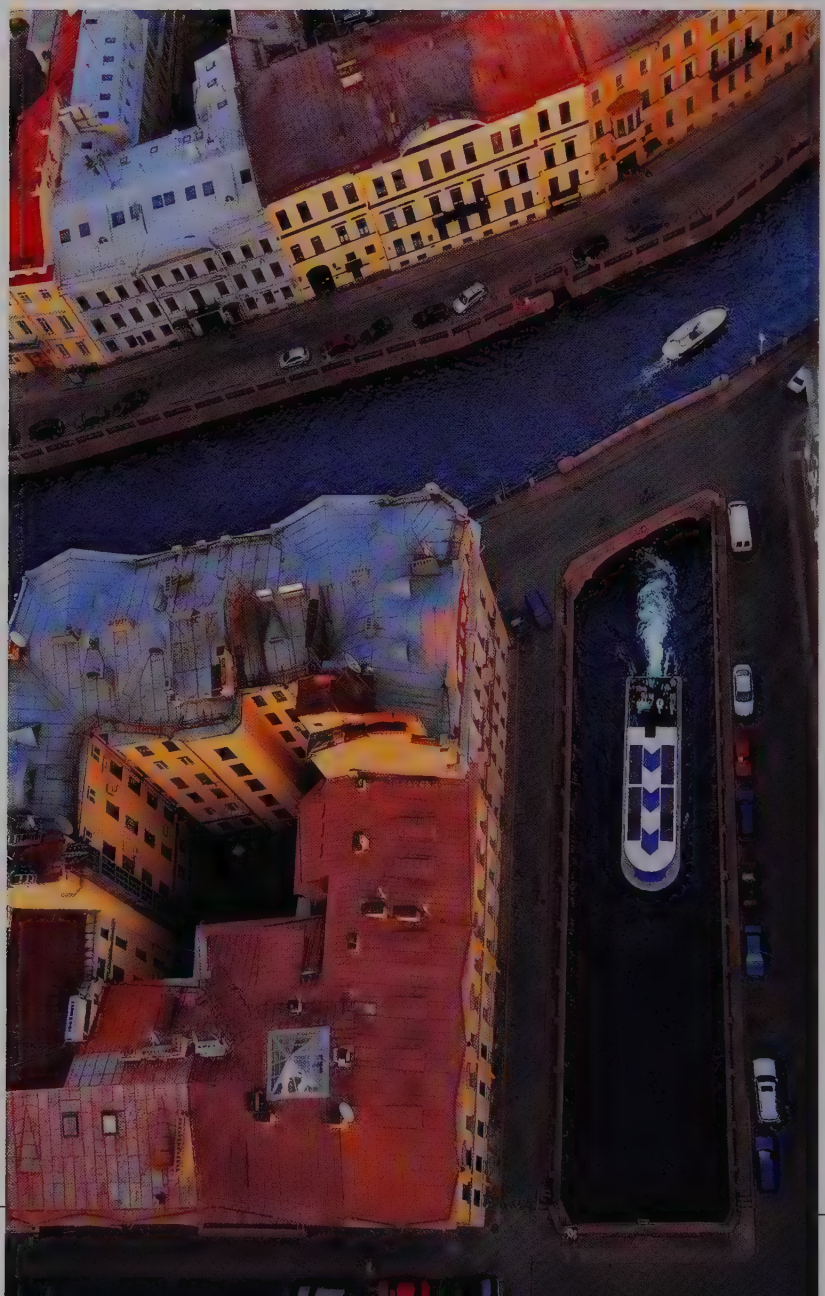

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46. Panoramic view of the city centre

47. The Moika River

48. The Moika River and the Winter Canal

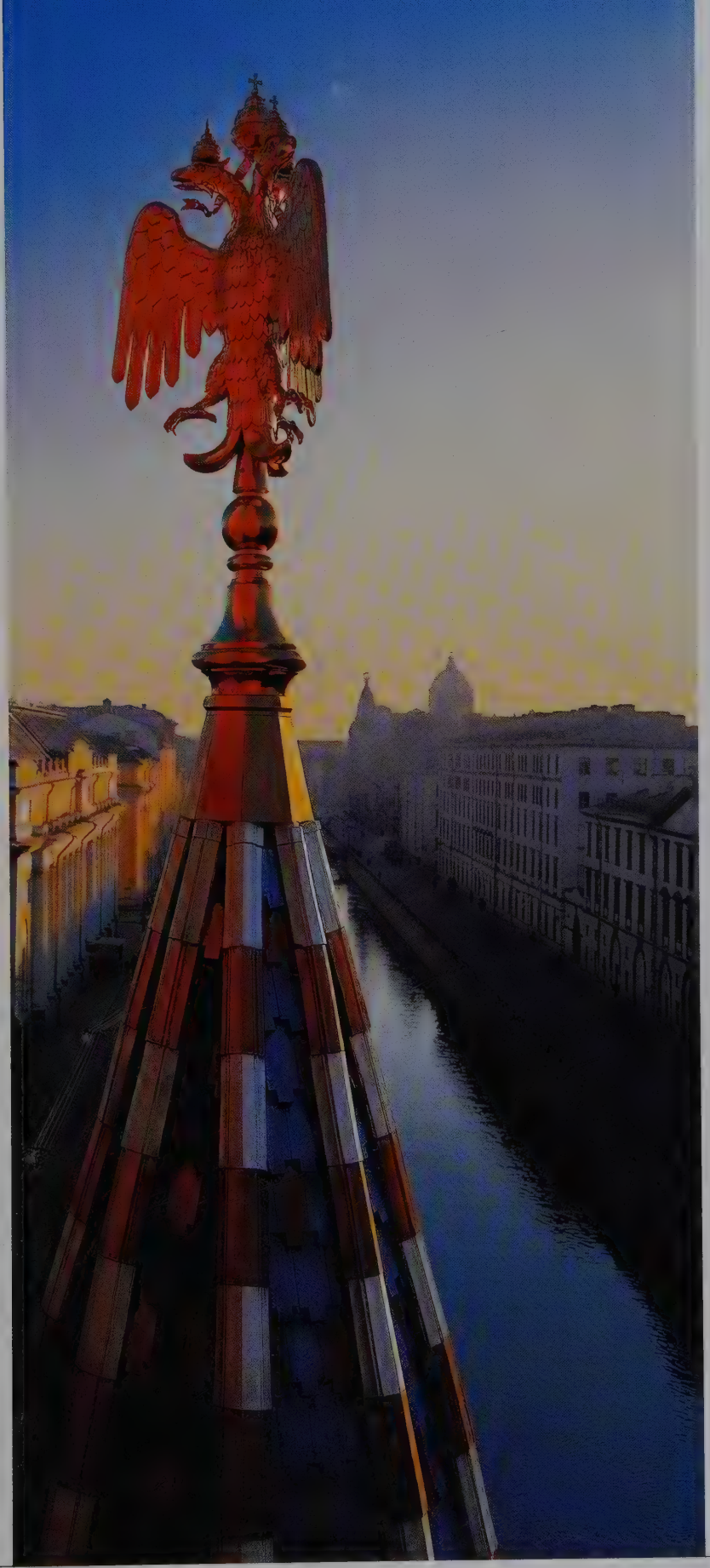
49. The Moika River and the Winter Canal. The Hermitage, First and Second Winter Bridges

If the silhouette of a bronze angel with a cross crowning the Alexander Column "is well "read" from many city points, a serpent it tramples, symbolizing Russia's victory over Napoleon's armies, is visible only from above. Having found out for yourself that the features of the heavenly face, resembling the likeness of Tsar-Winner Alexander I, are fine, and the serpent is similar to a dragon, let us go further, to the square of the Winter Canal where St Petersburg is especially associated with Venice.

Narrow and straight as an arrow, "compressed by heavy granite", the Winter Canal connects the Moika and the Neva. Its embankment is decorated by forged railings of Gothic patterns and supplied with rings for boat mooring and with steep stairs leading to the water. To marvel at this beauty, you need to go down from heavens and to wander along the Canal spanned by three bridges – the Hermitage and First and Second Winter Bridges.

52

Flat and "ruled" according to plans by architects, St Petersburg is truly fine. But its horizontal skyline gains an especial charm thanks to high-rise dominating structures. Such vertical accents are, first of all, churches. The multicoloured church with fanciful domes – the Cathedral of the Resurrection, commonly known as the "Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood" looks like a precious piece of jewellery by Fabergé. It was erected on the embankment of the Catherine Canal (nowadays the Griboyedov Canal) on the spot where the Tsar-Liberator Alexander II, who had signed a decree about the abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861, was mortally wounded by terrorists in 1881. The place of the tragic event has been incorporated into the cathedral where it is fenced by a special railing. Constructed with the use of the funds collected by the people and donated by the imperial family, the Cathedral of the Resurrection became one of the most remarkable and striking examples of the "Russian style". It resembles the famous Cathedral of St Basil the Blessed in Moscow with its extremely ornate exterior. For the facing of the building were employed granite, marble, decorative tiles and mosaics which embellish a large area inside the cathedral, too. A view from above allows us to appreciate the expressive shapes of the cathedral and the highly decorative treatment of its fronts.



←
50. Panoramic view of St Petersburg around the Cathedral of the Resurrection (the Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood)

51. Cathedral of the Resurrection (the Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood). 1883–1907. Architects: Alfred Parland, archimandrite Ignaty (Malyshev)

52. View of the Griboyedov Canal from the Cathedral of the Resurrection (the Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood)

54

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53. Domes of the Cathedral of the Resurrection (the Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood)

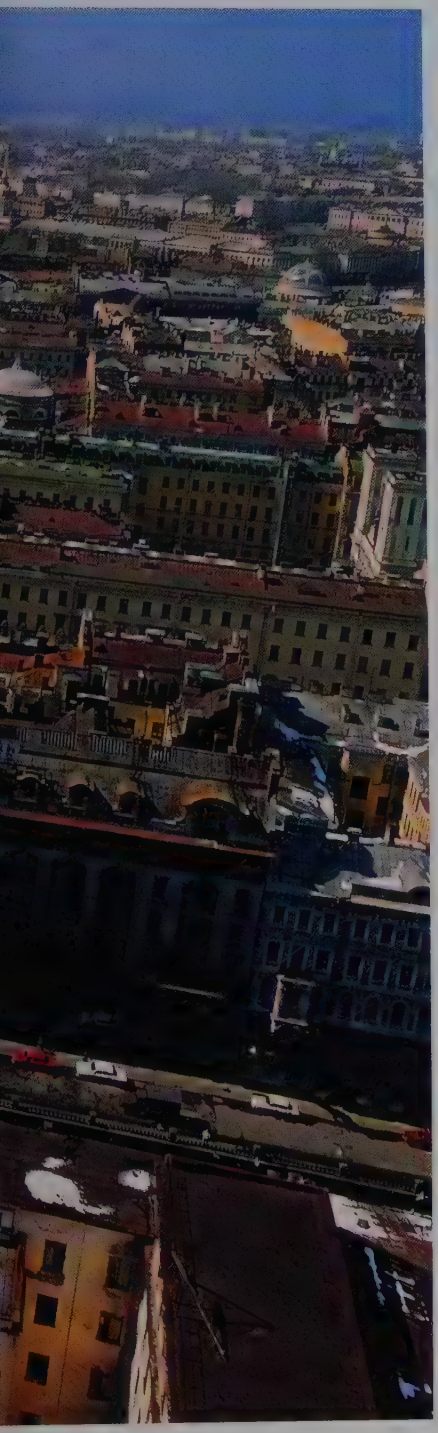
54. View of Nevsky Prospekt, the Singer Company building (the Book House) and the Griboyedov Canal.

55. The Neva verticals

56. Cathedral of the Resurrection (the Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood). The northern façade

57

Nevsky Prospekt, the city's main thoroughfare with a very intense traffic, is the most effective and elegant street of the northern capital, the centre of its trading, financial and cultural life for centuries. The Kazan Cathedral is an expressive architectural landmark of Nevsky Prospekt. Constructed on the orders of Emperor Paul I, this majestic edifice shows an impressive "parade" of its columns from the height of birds' flight. According to the plan of the architect Andrei Voronikhin, the colonnade of the cathedral was to resemble a sacred grove in front of an ancient temple. It seems to cut the cathedral off from the bustle of Nevsky Prospekt, designating a border between earthly and heavenly spheres. The panoramic view of the Kazan Cathedral could be even more grandiose if Voronikhin's dream to put up another colonnade on the south side of the building similarly to St. Peter's in Rome was ever realized.



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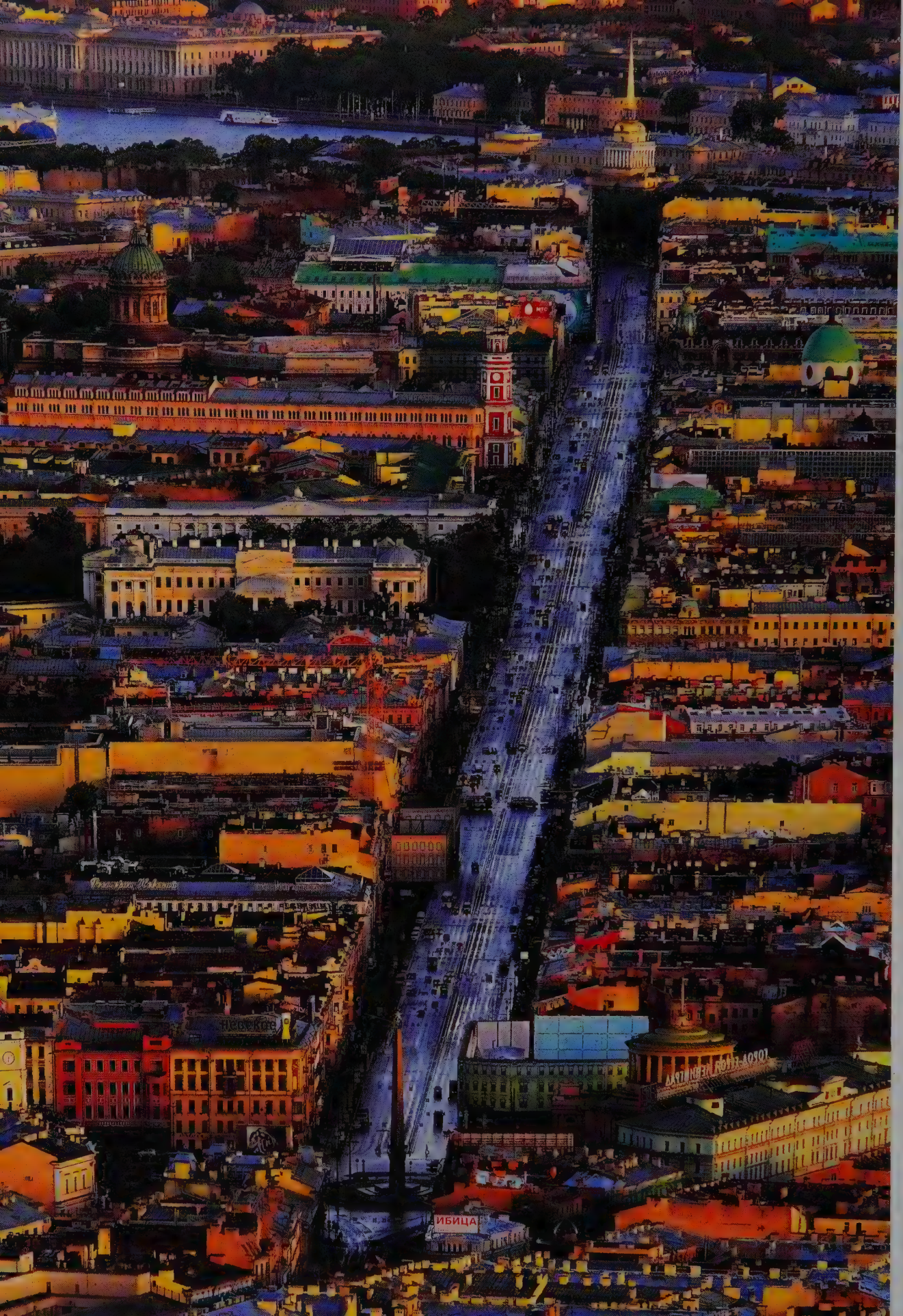
57. Nevsky Prospekt and the Kazan Cathedral

58, 59. The Singer Company building (the Book House) (1902–04, architect: Pavel Suzor, sculptor: Amandus Adamson). Details of the decoration


МТС
НЕВСКИЙ
ИБИЦА

62

63

Nevsky Prospekt stretches from the Admiralty tower to Vosstaniya Square so as having made a bend, to proceed towards the St Alexander Nevsky Monastery. The main street of St Petersburg is vividly described in the story *Nevsky Prospekt* by Nikolai Gogol ("Nevsky lies like a page from Gogol," wrote a well-known Soviet author). Notably, not very many streets were honoured to become heroes of works of art!

←
60. The Kazan Cathedral. 1801–11. Architect: Andrei Voronikhin

→
61–64. Nevsky Prospekt

65

66

St Petersburg is a city of religious tolerance. Devotional buildings of different confessions stand side by side peacefully. The Cathedral of St Catherine is the oldest and largest Catholic church in the northern capital. Angels of this church preserving the quiet life of city dwellers, are quite material, as their shades confirm.

65. High-rise structures in the centre of St Petersburg

66. The Armenian-Gregorian Church of St Catherine. 1771–80. Architect: Yury Velten

67. Lutheran Church of St Peter (1833–38, architect: Alexander Briullov, sculptors: Agostino Triscornia, Théodore Jacque)

→

68. Nevsky Prospekt. The Gostiny Dvor Trading Arcade and the building of the Municipal Duma

S PETRI

СБЕРБАНК РОССИИ

69

70

The Griboyedov Canal was known in the old days as the Krivusha River. A view from above provides a fine panorama of the fancifully winding river bed with footbridges spanning its banks here and there.

69. The Griboyedov Canal.
The Bank Bridge. 1825–26.
Engineer: V. von Tretter,
sculptor: Pavel Sokolov

70. New Manège Square

71. The Griboyedov Canal.
The building of the Assignation Bank
(St Petersburg University of Economy
and Finance). 1783–90.
Architect: Giacomo Quarenghi

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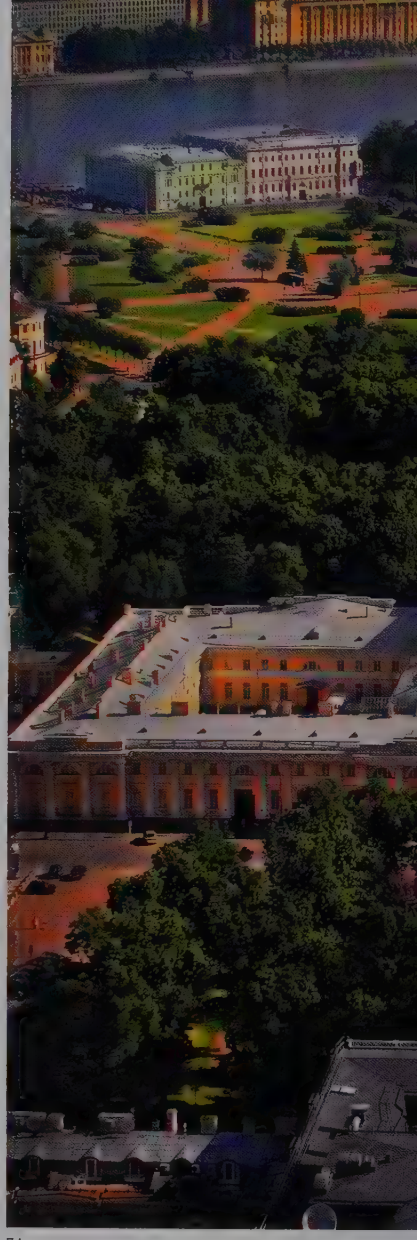

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72. Quadriga *Apollo* on the attic of the Alexandrine Theatre. 1828–32. Sculptors: Vasily Demuth-Malinovsky, Stepan Pimenov

73. Ostrovsky Square. The Alexandrine Theatre. 1828–32. Architect: Carlo Rossi

74. The Mikhailovsky Palace (the State Russian Museum). 1819–25. Architect: Carlo Rossi

75. The Russian Ethnographic Museum. 1900–11. Architect: Vasily Svinyin

→

76. Roofs of St Petersburg

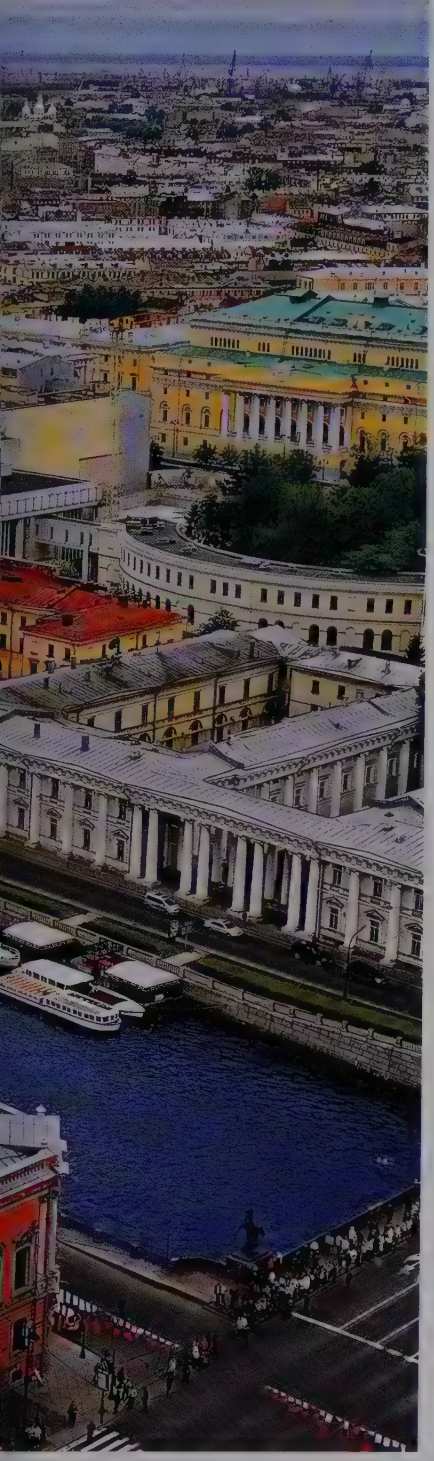
75

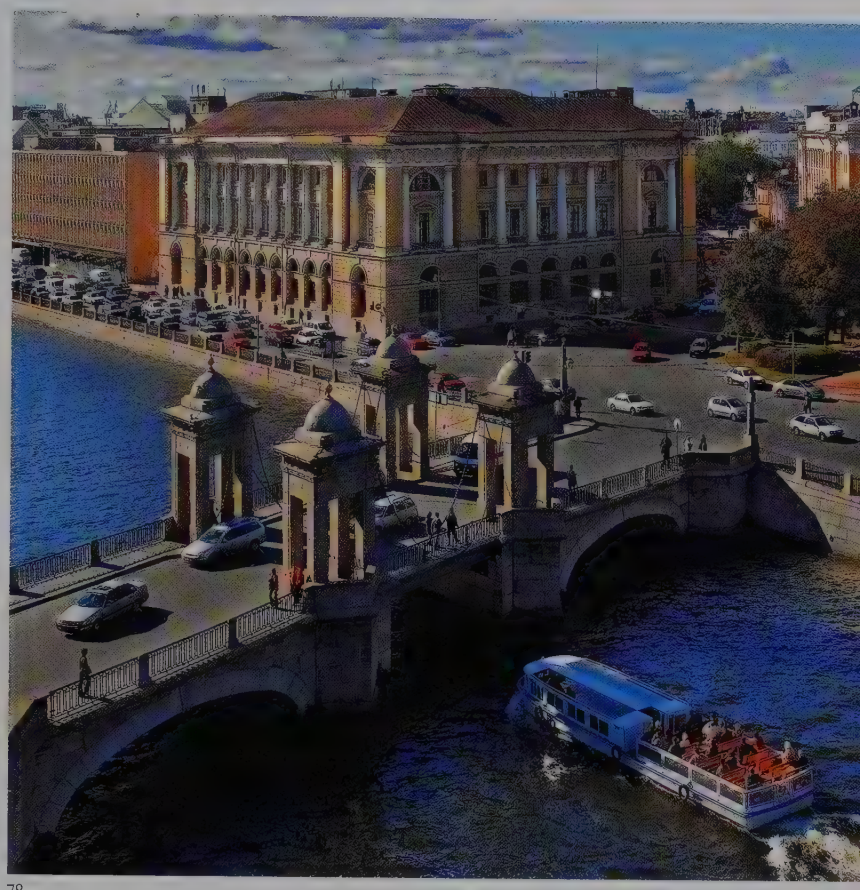
St Petersburg architects always sought to create ensembles above all and thought in terms of vast space at once – so it is not without reason that there is a saying: "The measure unit of St Petersburg is a square." You understand the justice of this statement when you look from a height at Ostrovsky Square situated in front of the Alexandrine Theatre or Arts Square near the Russian Museum (the Mikhailovsky Palace), whose perspective views are completed by the buildings perfect in form and having majestic Classical porticoes created to projects by the architect Carlo Rossi.

77

The Fontanka River is a channel flowing from the Neva near the Summer Gardens and discharging its waters at Gutuyevsky Island into the Neva again. One of the city's most significant waterways has taken its name from the no longer existing fountains of the Summer Gardens. The Fontanka was clad in granite in the second half of the eighteenth century when a project for the improvement of its banks included railings executed presumably from drawings by Giacomo Quarenghi as well as squares near bridges and descents to the water.

There was a series of identical river crossings with turrets alongside the Fontanka similar to those of the present-day Lomonosov and Old Kalinkin Bridges. Now each of its fourteen bridges has an individual appearance as for example the most famous of them – the Anichkov Bridge decorated with fine sculptural groups created by Peter Klodt and devoted to the theme of horse taming. It is interesting that similar horse compositions by the same sculptor can be found in Berlin and Naples.





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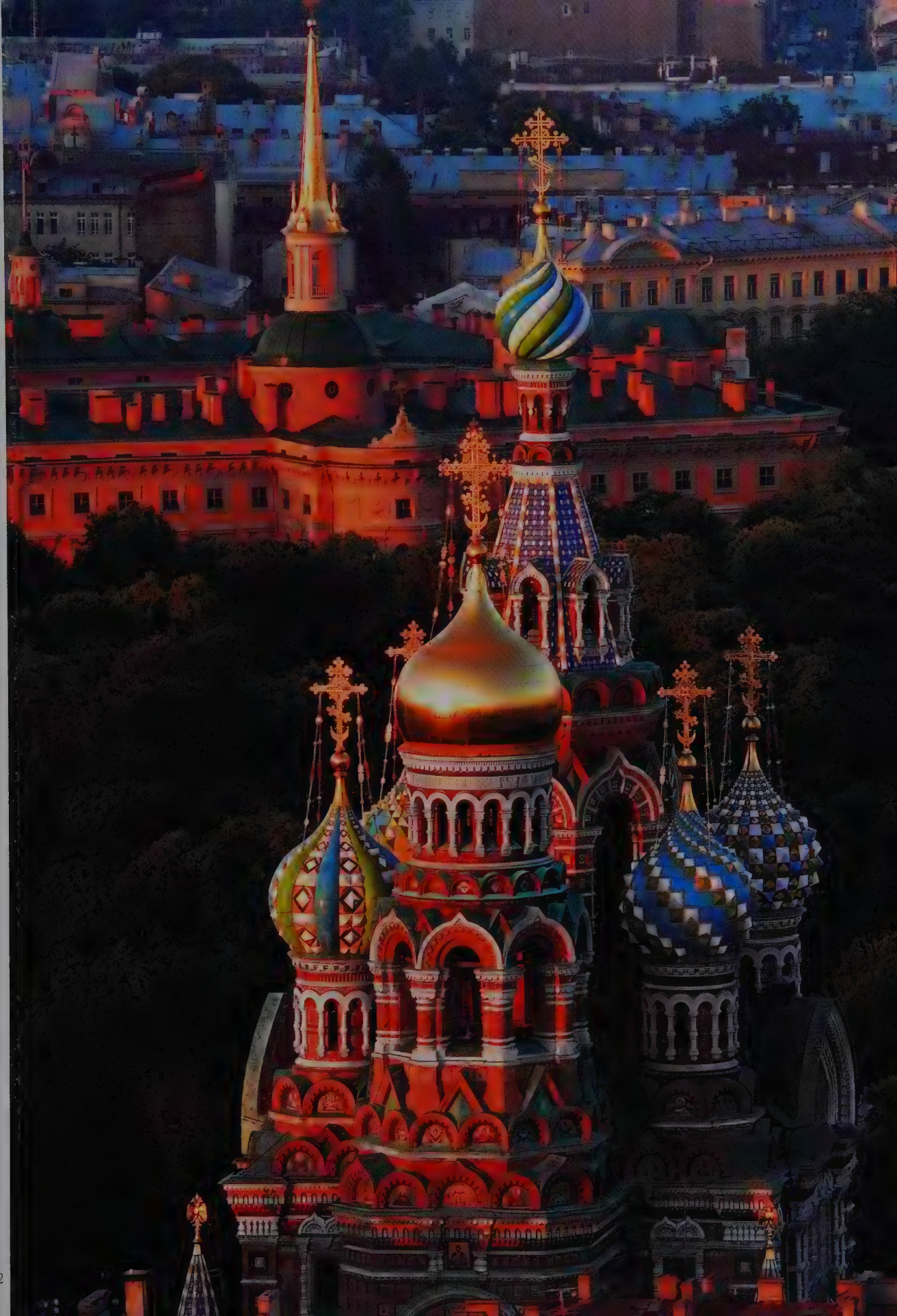
77. The Fontanka River

78. The Fontanka River. The Lomonosov Bridge. 1785–87. Engineers: Johann Gerard, Peter van Suhtelen

79. The Fontanka River. The Anichkov Bridge. Sculptural group *Taming a Horse*. 1840. Sculptor: Peter Klodt

→

80. The Mikhailovsky (Engineering) Castle. 1784–1800. Architects: Vasily Bazhenov, Vincenzo Brenna



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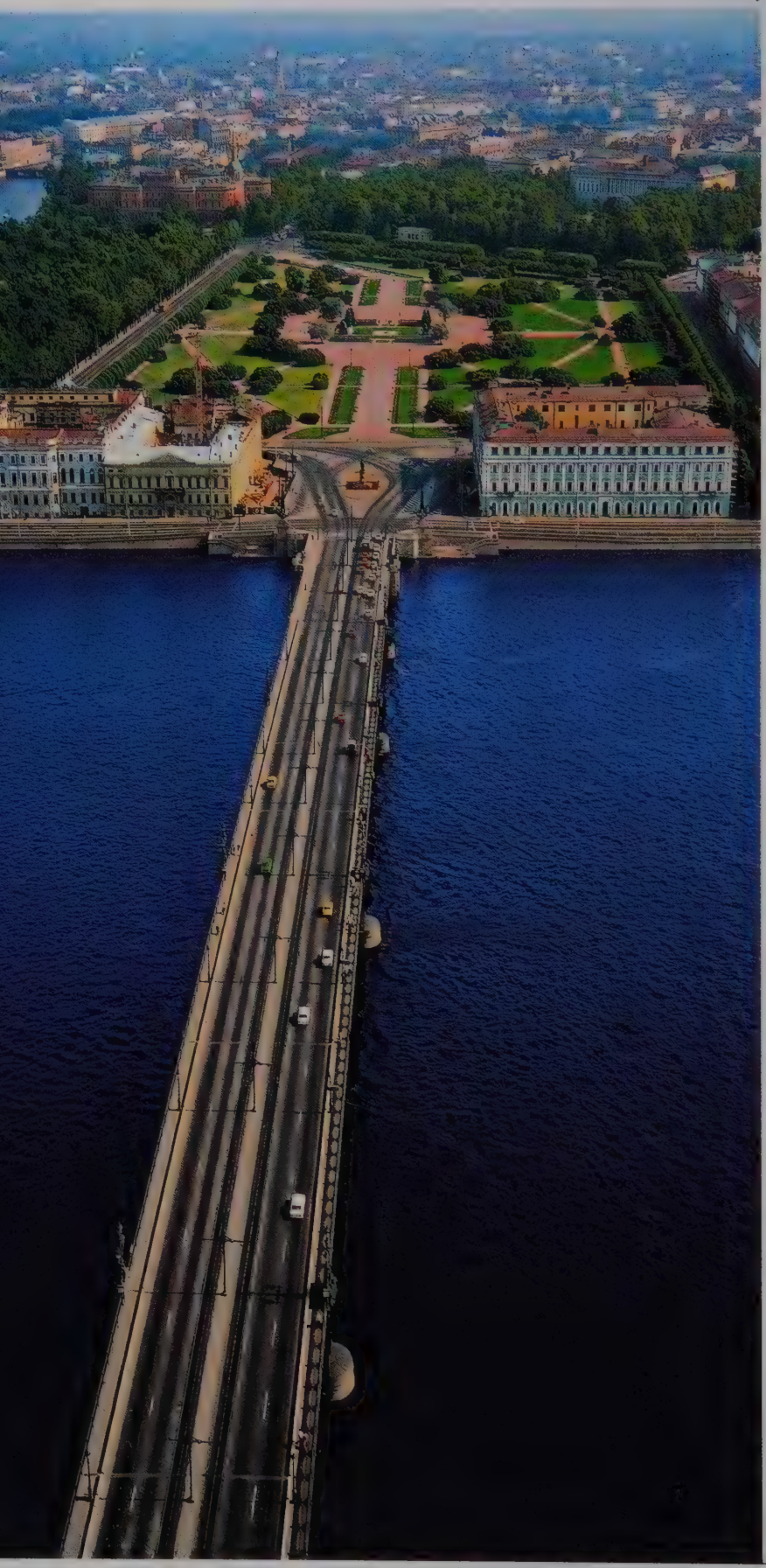

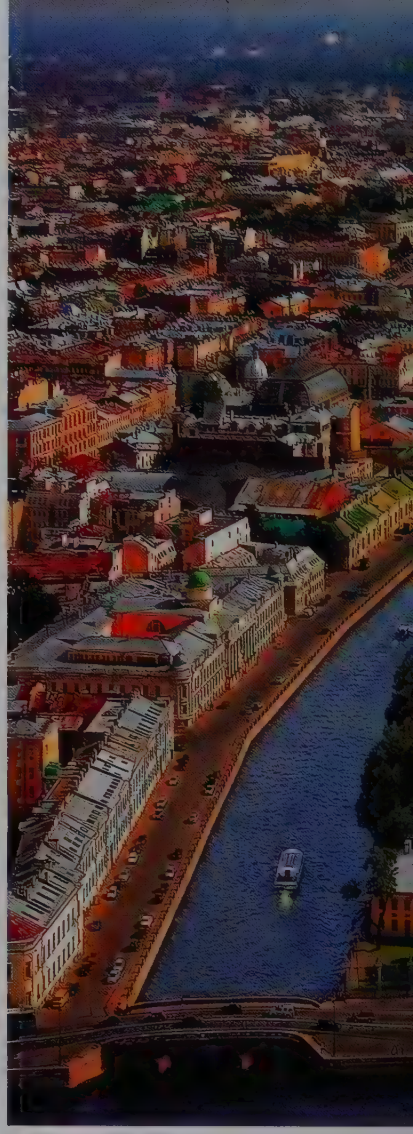

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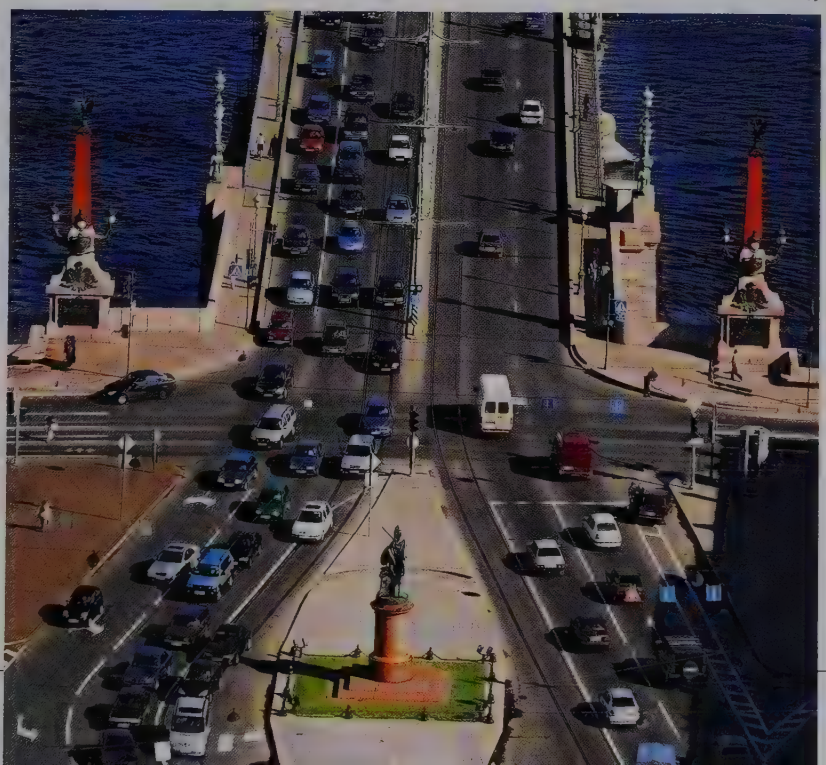
From the height of a bird's flight it is well visible that unlike other major cities of Europe, which were developing spontaneously in the course of many centuries, the city on the Neva was created by whole architectural complexes according to a coherent plan. Two picturesque green areas, the Mikhailovsky and Summer Gardens, spread near a parterre park – the Field of Mars. The gorgeous Mikhailovsky (Engineering) Castle is located near the Field of Mars. The history of this building, one of the most romantic creations of St Petersburg architecture, is shrouded in mystery. The impregnable castle was erected for Emperor Paul I who was afraid of a violent death, but it was in his new residence that the Tsar was murdered

forty days after he had moved in. The Field of Mars passes into the elegantly curving Trinity Bridge that links the banks of the Neva in its widest, most regal place. The amazingly beautiful Trinity Bridge, with a lacy pattern of its girders, suddenly reminds the neck of a cello from above.

←
81. View of the Mikhailovsky (Engineers') Castle, the Field of Mars and the Peter and Paul Fortress
←
82. View of on the Cathedral of the Resurrection (the Saviour-on-the-Spilt-Blood) and the Mikhailovsky (Engineering) Castle
→
83, 85, 86. The Trinity Bridge. 1897–1907. The Batignolles Company

84. View of the Summer Gardens and the Field of Mars



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89

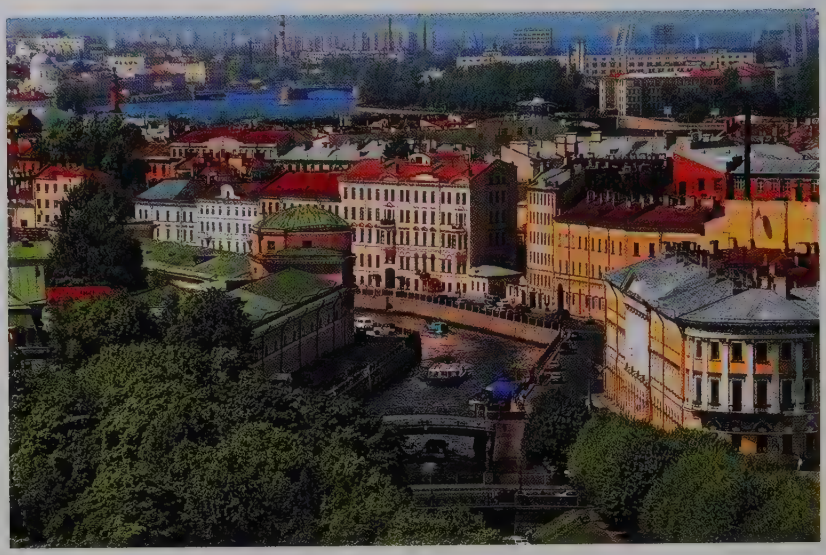
The Trinity Bridge in turn passes into Kamennoostrovsky Prospekt leading to the islands – a solution which harmoniously expands the space of St Petersburg.

St Petersburg is thought to be a black-and-white city and the engraver's dream, but it is not exactly so. The colouring of its houses is so diverrse that the city looks like a tapestry from the air. The colours of Baroque buildings are emerald, green or dark red with white, while Classicist structures are

87. A turret with a clock on the attic of the Marble Palace

88. View of the river the Sink and the Field of Mars

89. The Marble Palace. 1768–85. Architect: Antonio Rinaldi



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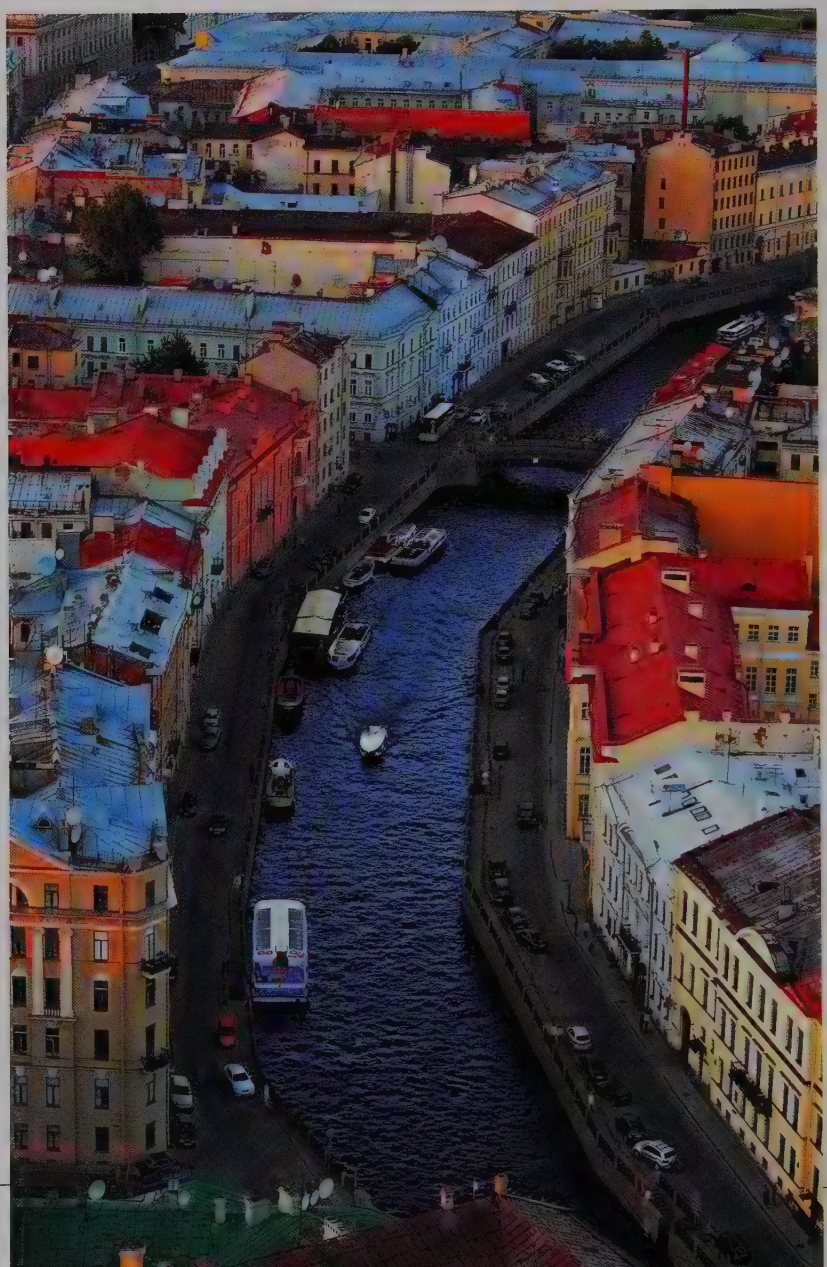


92

yellow, pink, blue and salad; towards the end of the nineteenth century grey and beige colours became fashionable. The palette of St Petersburg urbanistic beauty can be adequately appreciated at least in the central area cut through by the Moika – the buildings crowding on its embankments are extremely picturesque.

The Moika is one of water arteries in the central part of the city. Taking its start from the Fontanka, it flows into the Neva; the Swan Canal, the Winter Canal and the Priazhka River divert from it, while the Kriukov Canal crosses it. Each turn of this

fairly narrow meandering river provides a new, unexpected panorama. Granite embankments appeared on the Moika in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, at the same time fourteen bridges, each of which is a true masterpiece of engineering art, spanned its banks.

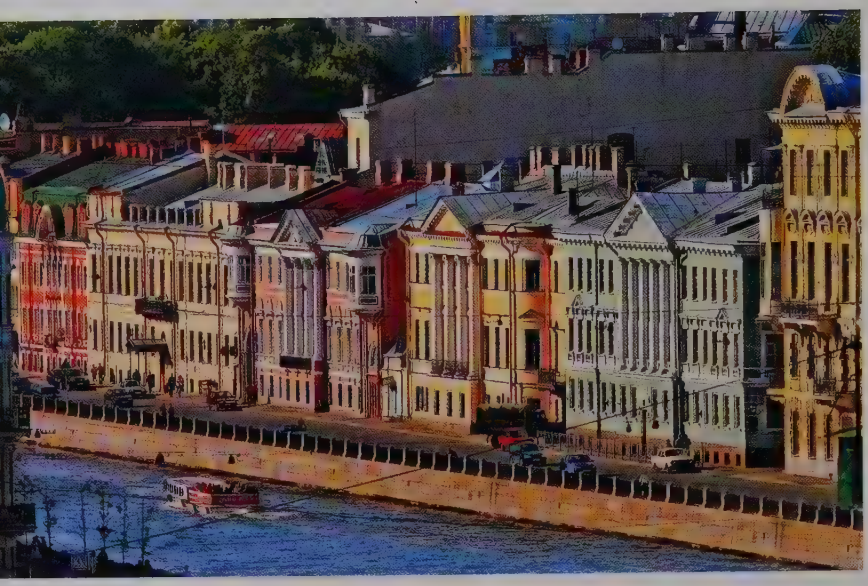
93

90, 91, 93. The Moika River

92. The left river bank of the Moika River. Building of the Main Imperial Stables

→

94. The Small Koniushenny and Theatre Bridges at the crossing of the river of the Sink and Griboyedov Canal



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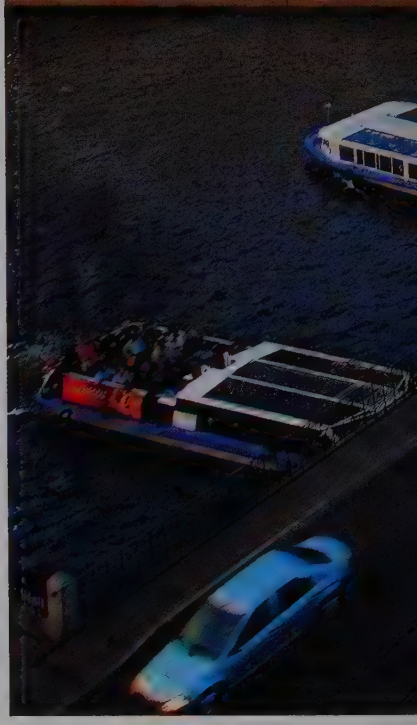

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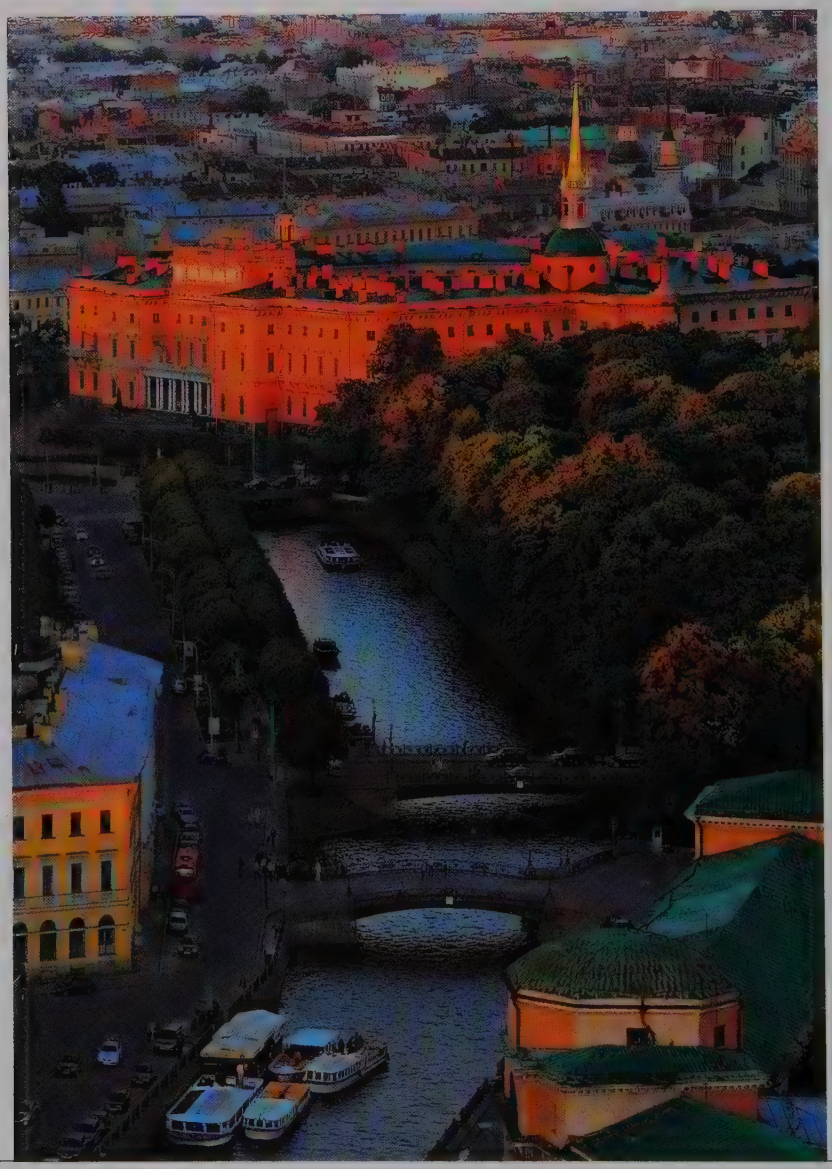


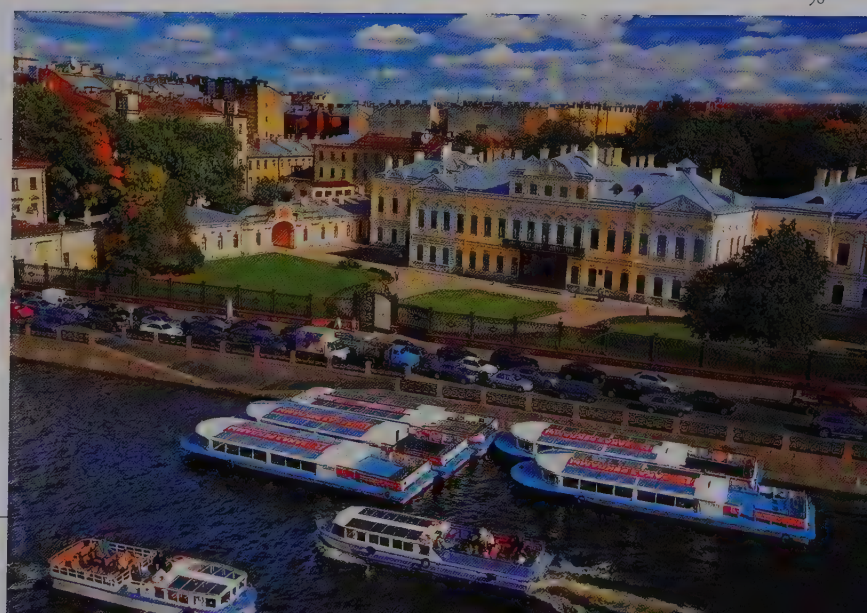
Creating a new capital, Tsar Peter dreamed of making it similar to Amsterdam and Venice famous for their networks of canals with boats and gondolas scurrying about. In St Petersburg, which had a lot of natural water currents, artificial water canals were also dug out in addition. In Peter's age waterways were extremely busy, but later, with the construction of bridges, these transport arteries became less important, but even now a great variety of large and small boats are hurrying here and there by the rivers and canals.

95. Embankment of the Fontanka River

96. The Fontanka River around the Mikhailovsky (Engineers') Castle

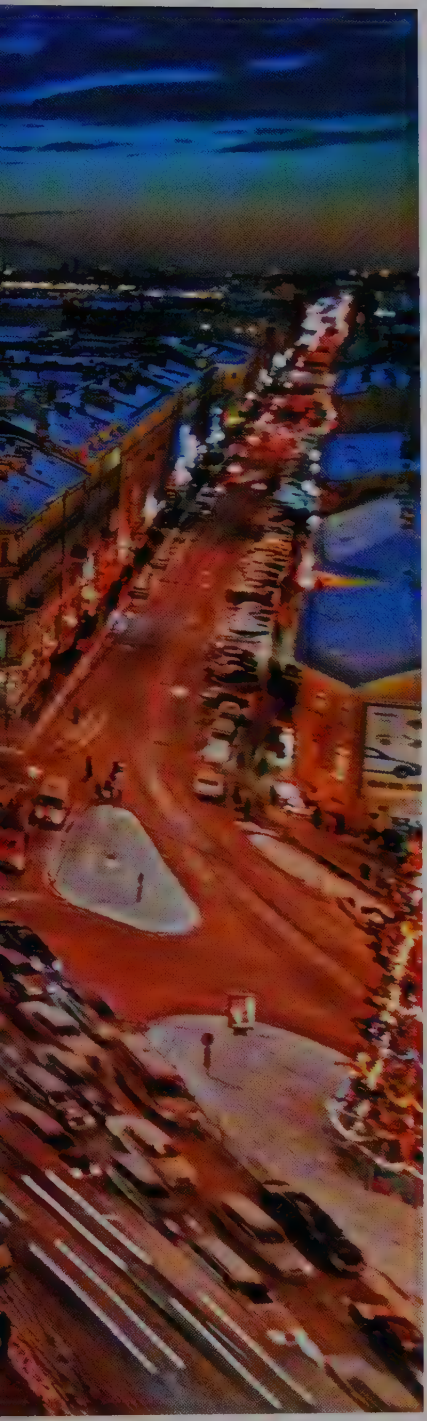
97. Panoramic view of the Belinsky Bridge across the Fontanka and the square near the bridge with the Church of St Simeon and St Anna

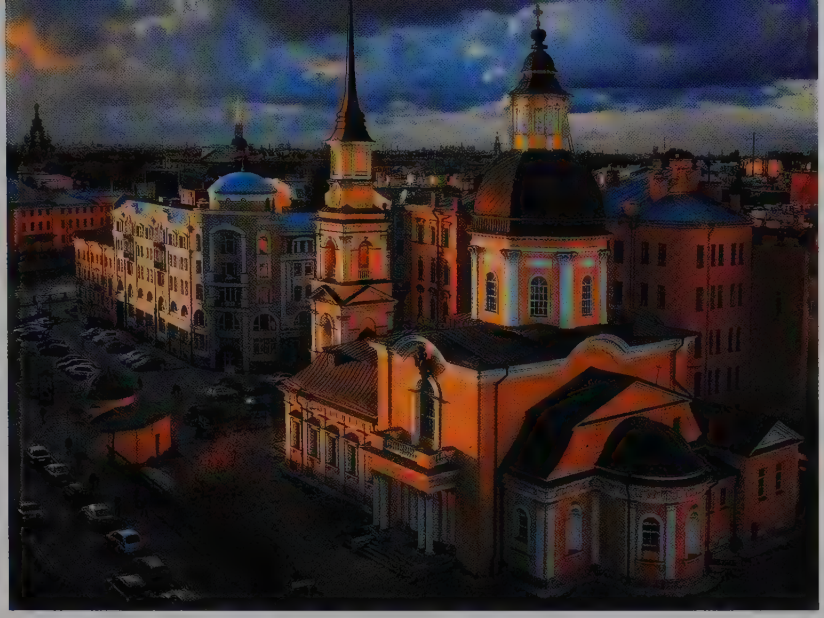
98. The Fontanka River.
The Sheremetev Palace. 1746–50.
Architects: Savva Chevakinsky,
Fiodor Argunov



99

In modern St Petersburg with its bustle, infinite streams of cars and pedestrians, there are zones reigned by solemn calm. Churches and cathedrals occupy key points on the city's maps. Sometimes they close streets, like the Cathedral of the Transfiguration. Frequently they stand on the squares, like the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God of Vladimir, a parishioner of which was the great Russian writer Fiodor Dostoyevsky. Their domes and high bell-towers add much to the beauty of generally flat St Petersburg. The expressive silhouettes of churches echo one another, linking perspective views of the northern capital and creating a unique skyline of the city. Churches are the centres of spiritual life of St Petersburg. There are still lots of them nowadays, and in 1917 there were four hundred sixty-five Orthodox churches in the capital of the Russian Empire.





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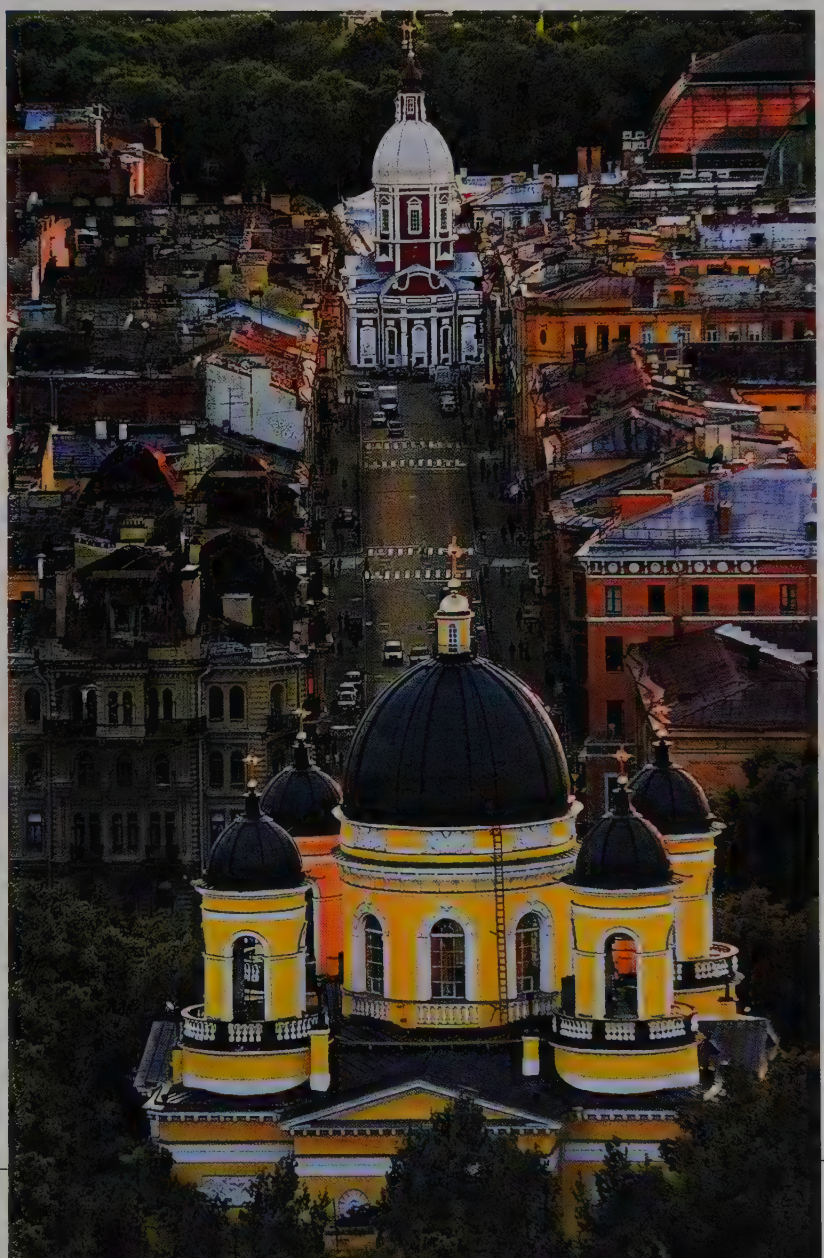


99. Church of the Icon of the Mother of God of Vladimir. 1761–69, 1780–83

100. Church of St Simeon and St Anna. 1731–34. Architect: Mikhail Zemtsov

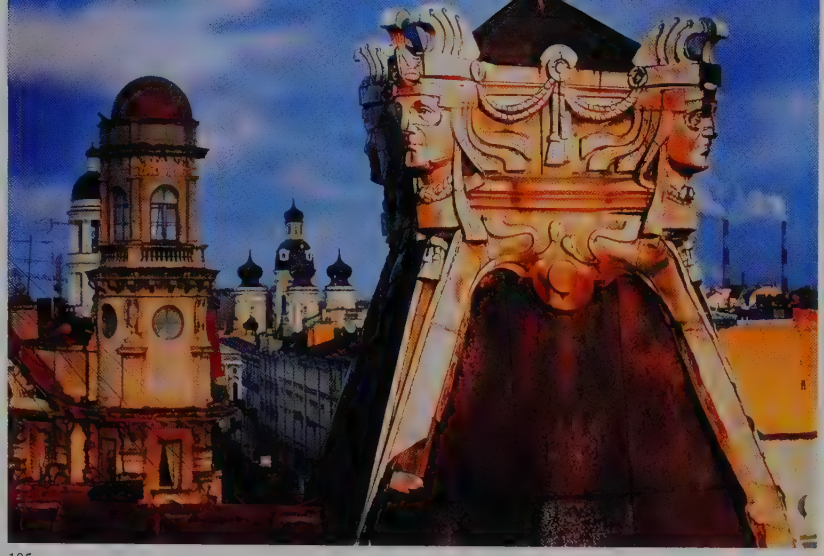
101. Cathedral of the Transfiguration (1743–54, architect: Mikhail Zemtsov; 1828–29, architect: Vasily Stasov) and the Church of the Martyr St Panteleimon (1735–36, architect: N. Schumacher)

102

103

104

From the very beginning the northern capital had also another side, opposite to an outward glitter, the side where there was no place for palace ensembles and spacious squares, but blocks with narrow streets, lanes and blind alleys stretched in a continuous line. This aspect of the city has been long since described by an expres-



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106

sive, if largely conventional, name – the St Petersburg of Dostoyevsky. If the characters from works by the great Russian writer inhabiting this world would be able to soar up over the gloomy routine of their life, they would see a human beehive with monotonous tenement houses similar to honeycombs and dark well-like courtyards.

107

108

←
102–105. Roofs of St Petersburg

←
106. View from the bell-tower of Church of the Mother on Vladimirsky Prospekt and Kolokolnaya Street

107. Bridges over the Fontanka River. View of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

108, 109. Domes of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity (1828–35, architect: Vasily Stasov)

→
110. The Griboyedov Canal. The Lion Bridge. 1825–26. Engineer: Wilhelm von Tretteur, sculptor: Pavel Sokolov

111

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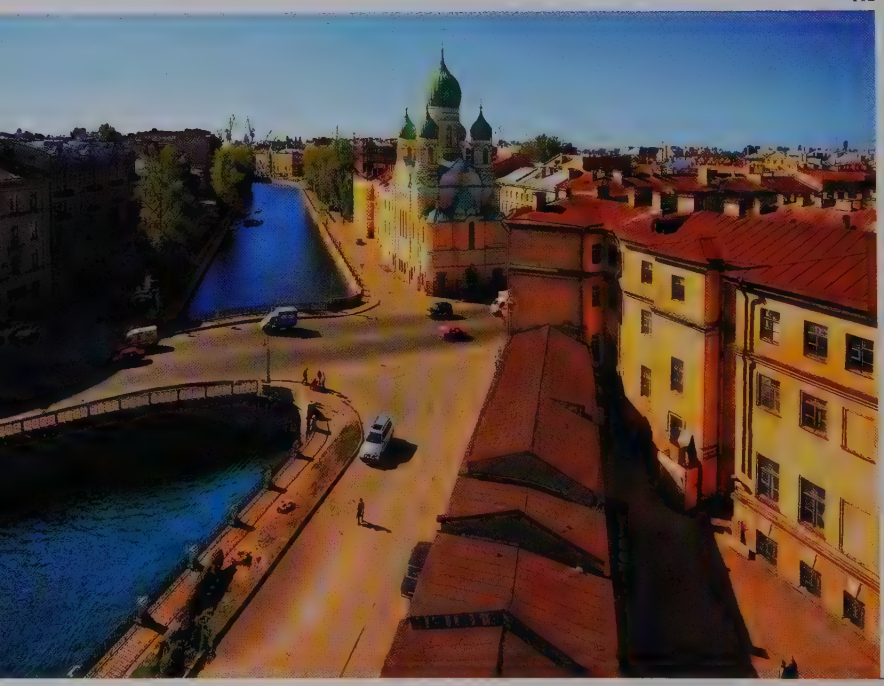


The ungainly aspect of St Petersburg is embodied most vividly in the Kolomna area. One's attention is caught here from a height by the strange realm of roofs. In general St Petersburg roofs have a special history of their own. In Peter's age they were high and made of tiles. Gusty winds from the Baltic Sea used to blow tiles off and therefore the city had to reject tiling as well as expensive copper which was had also been employed for roofing in the eighteenth century.

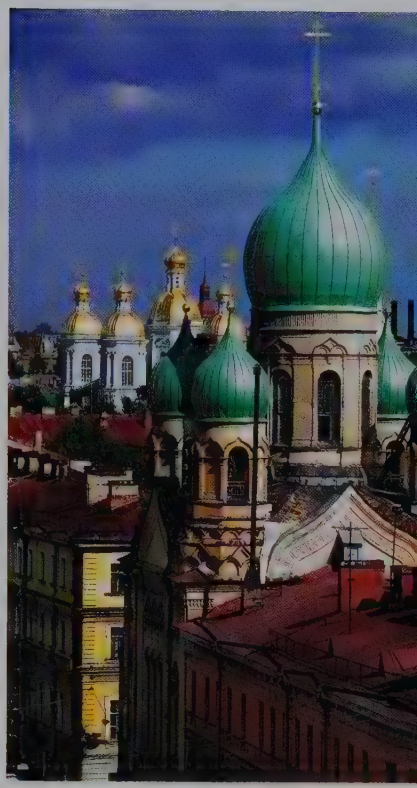
111. The Pikalov and Krasnogvardeysky Bridges. On the right, the building of the former Nikolsky Market

112, 114. View of the Church of St Isidore (1903–05, architect: Alexander Poleshchuk)

113. A courtyard in the Kolomna area

115. The Griboyedov Canal

113



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From the east the Kolomna area is limited by the cosy, picturesque Kriukov Canal connecting the Fontanka with the Admiralty Canal. On the bank of the Kriukov Canal stands a poetic architectural complex, the centre of which is the Naval Cathedral of St Nicholas and the Theophany. A masterpiece of the Russian Baroque, the cathedral looks extraordinary ornate and elegant, but only from a height it is possible to fully estimate the expressiveness of its volumes, its saturated colours and its elaborate decoration with the heads of cherubs, clouds and flowers.

The space of the ensemble is harmonized by the detached bell-tower of the Cathedral of St Nicholas – it seems to glimmer in the twilight of the White Nights like a candle. Services in the Cathedral of St Nicholas were not interrupted even during the siege; Leningraders prayed here, like in other functioning churches, for a victory over the enemy.

116, 117. The Naval Cathedral of St Nicholas and the Theophany. 1753–62. Architect: Savva Chevakinsky

118. View of the Kriukov Canal and the Naval Cathedral of St Nicholas and the Theophany

118

120

121

In the Kolomna area and its environs, the most typically "St Petersburg" district of city, there is also a ring of squares and the most popular among them is Theatre Square. It owes its name to the world-famous Mariinsky Theatre standing on the square.
The boundaries of the Kolomna area run along the Fontanka and the Moika, which have remarkable bridges in this part of the city, too. One of them is the hanging chain Post Office Bridge intended only for pedestrians.

119. Theatre Square. The Mariinsky Theatre. 1847–49, 1859, architect: Albert Kavos; 1883–86, 1894, architect: Victor Schröter

120. The Fontanka River

121. The Moika River. The Pochtamtsky Bridge. 1823–24. Engineers: Wilhelm von Tretteur, Vasily Khristianovich

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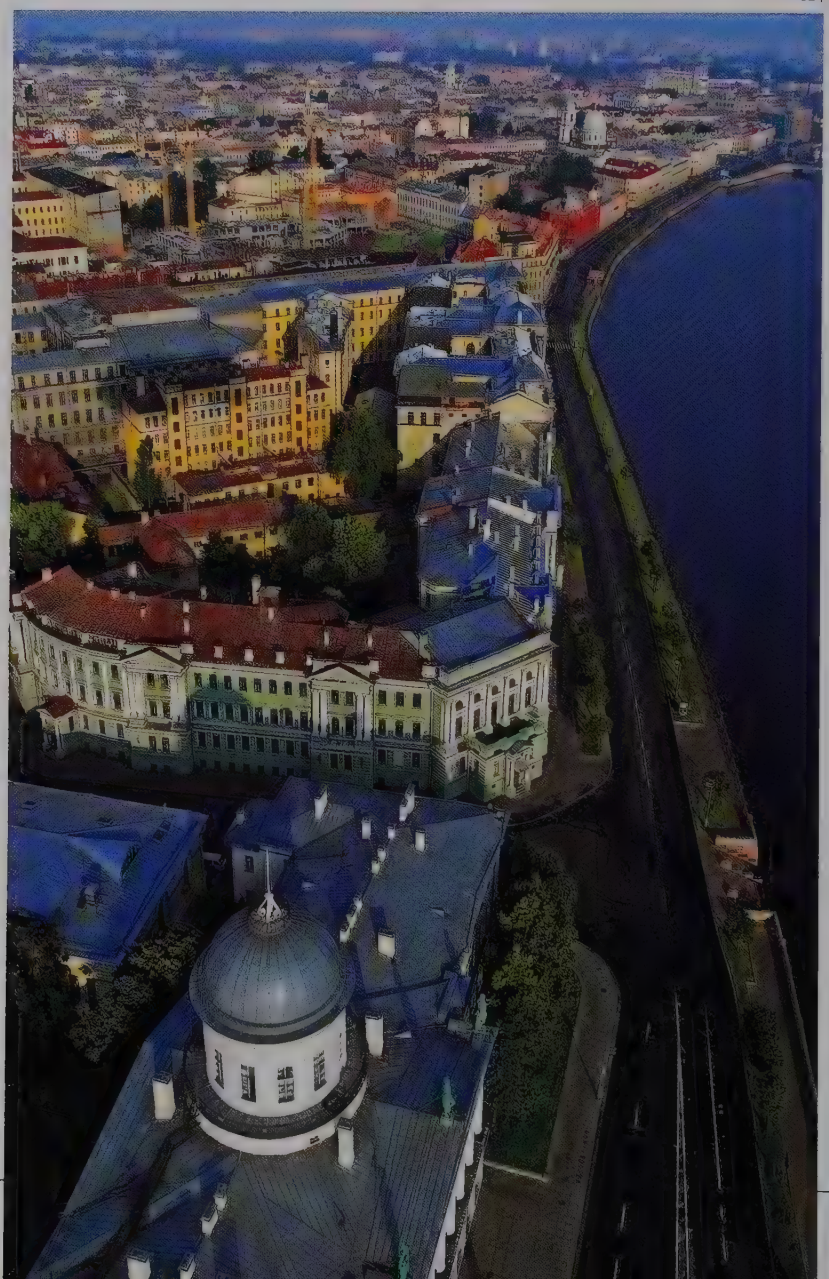

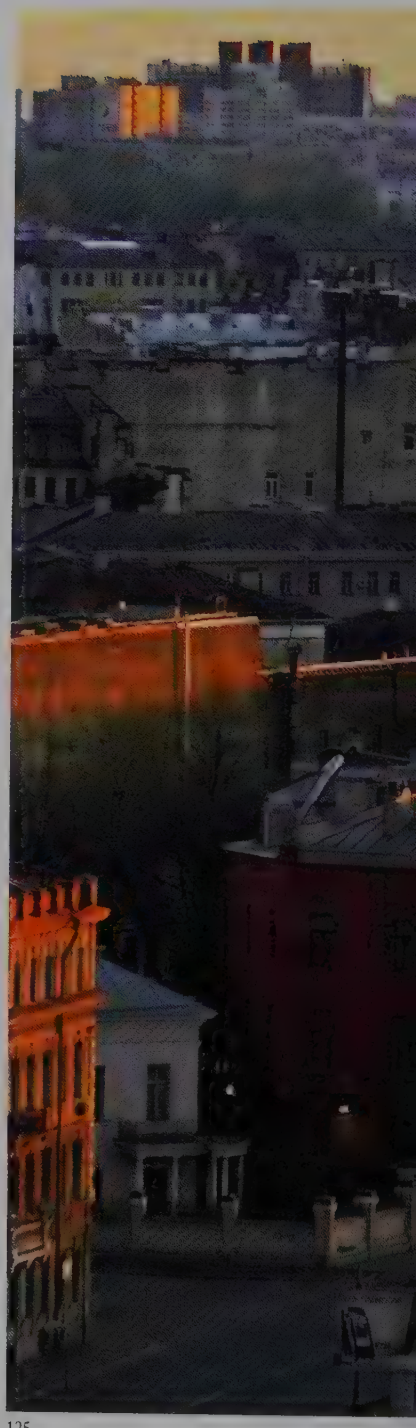

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122. Panoramic view of Vasilyevsky Island

123. The Cathedral of St Andrew. 1764–80. Architect: Alexander Wüst

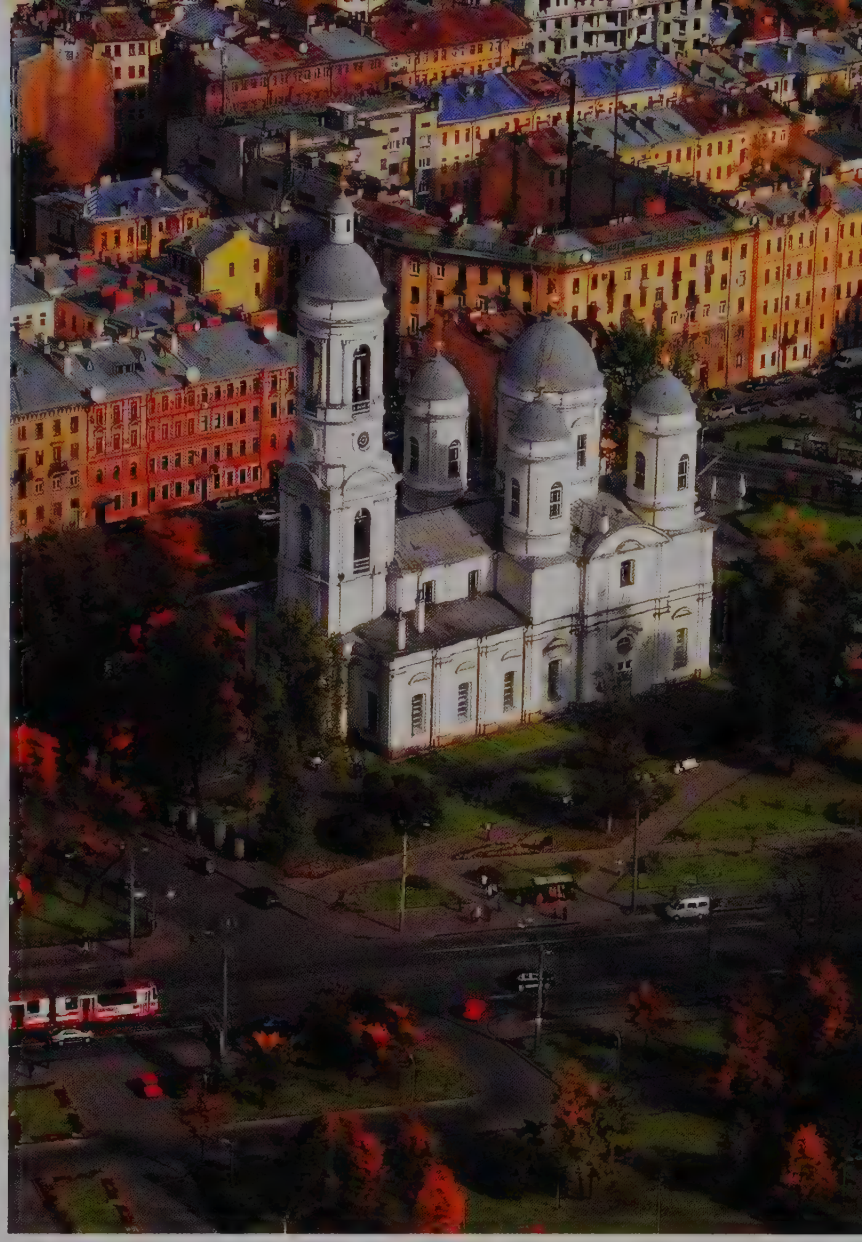
124, 125. The embankments of the Small Neva

The Small Neva River is a branch diverging from the mainstream of the Large Neva to the right near the Spit of Vasilyevsky Island. Its left bank is the Admiral Makarov Embankment clad in granite at the beginning of the nineteenth century. A panoramic view of the Small Neva is enlivened by the domes of the Institute of Russian Literature (the Pushkin House), preserving rich collections of documents and manuscripts of great Russian writers, and the Classicist Church of St Catherine crowned with the figure of a heavenly messenger – an angel. An outstanding monument of the Baroque taste, the Cathedral of St. Andrew the First-Called was the first order church of Russia. The cavaliers of the Order of St Andrew the First-Called used to meet in it and the blissful St Xenia prayed here to God for all sufferers. The domes of cathedrals and churches rise high over Vasilyevsky Island – from a height their silhouettes are perceived as links between the earth and heavens.

126

The Petrograd Side is a part of the city which emerged as a settlement still in the reign of Peter the Great. Trinity Square, named after the first church which stood on it, is the earliest in St Petersburg. It was constructed simultaneously with the Peter and Paul Fortress. Near the square, on the Petrovsky Embankment, stands a small wooden house, Peter's Log Cabin, which has survived. It is covered from the elements by a special protective brick case.

The area near the Tuchkov Bridge in the old days was nicknamed Mokrushi (Wet Place) because the low banks were often flooded. The Cathedral of St Prince Vladimir, which dominates the territory of the Petrograd Side near the Neva became a veritable landmark of the district. It is consecrated to St Prince Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles, who baptized Russia. From the height of a bird's flight it is possible to consider, how clear-cut is the horseshoe outline of the Kronwerk (nowadays housing the Artillery Museum) the Peter and Paul Fortress, the elegant ellipse of the Petrovsky Stadium and an impressive silhouette of the Yubileiny Sports Centre.



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126. Panoramic view of the Large Neva and the Small Neva. On the left, the Petrograd Side

127. Cathedral of St Prince Vladimir. 1741–72. Architects: Mikhail Zemtsov, Pietro Trezzini, Antonio Rinaldi

128. Trinity Square and Petrovskaya Embankment

129

130

131

129, 131. The Large Nevka. The cruiser *Aurora* at her permanent berth

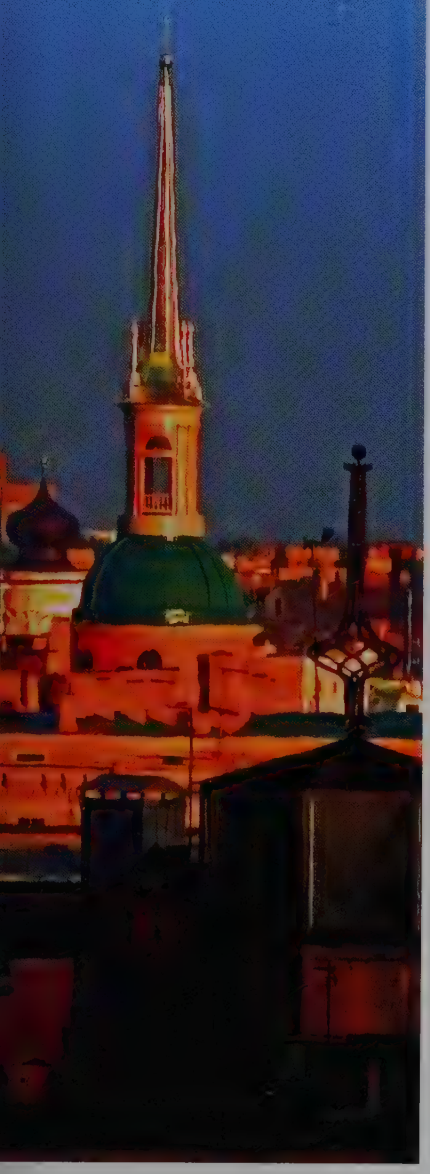
130. A high-rise building on the Vyborg Side. View of on the Petrograd Side

The cruiser *Aurora*, which made a signal shot for the storming of the Winter Palace in October 1917, is moored to the Petrogradskaya Embankment of the Large Nevka. This armour-decked ship had its baptism of fire in the Battle of Tsushima in 1905 during the Russo-Japanese War, participated in the defence of Leningrad during the Great Patriotic War and served as an educational vessel. Nowadays she functions as a museum. Near the cruiser, on the Petrovskaya Embankment, stands the elegant building of the Nakhimov Naval School stylized in the manner of the Petrine Baroque. This educational establishment is intended for training future officers of the Russian fleet. Many well-known Russian naval commanders graduated from it.

132

133

The Art Nouveau style in all its versions became in fact the last powerful chord of the city's architectural symphony. It distinguishes many tenement houses and banks of St Petersburg with their magnificent and elaborate façades thoroughly finished in expensive stonework. Almost the whole district of the city, the Petrograd Side, is built over with architecture in the Art Nouveau style. The buildings erected here allow us to study all architectural styles of this period – neo-Romanesque, neo-Gothic, neo-Classical and neo-Renaissance styles. The most notable examples of a the Art Nouveau style decorate the uniquely straight Kamennoostrovsky Prospekt, seemingly drawn with the use of a



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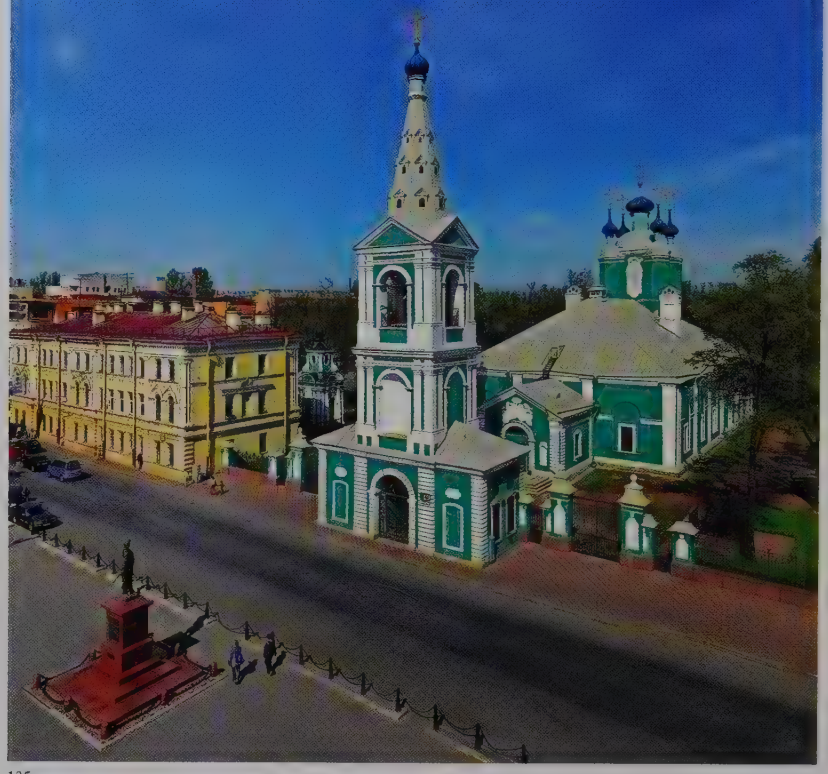
ruler – a sort of Nevsky Prospekt of twentieth-century St Petersburg. Ranking with the best architectural monuments of St Petersburg are also the so-called House with Towers on Leo Tolstoy Square, which is one of the most romantic Art Nouveau edifices, and the Congregational Mosque – a variation of the Mausoleum of Gur Amir, the necropolis of Timur descendants, in Samarkand.

132. A dome and a minaret of the Congregational Mosque – the northernmost Moslem temple in the world

133. K. Rosenstein's Mansion. 1913–16. Architect: Andrei Belogrud

134. Houses of the Petrograd Side



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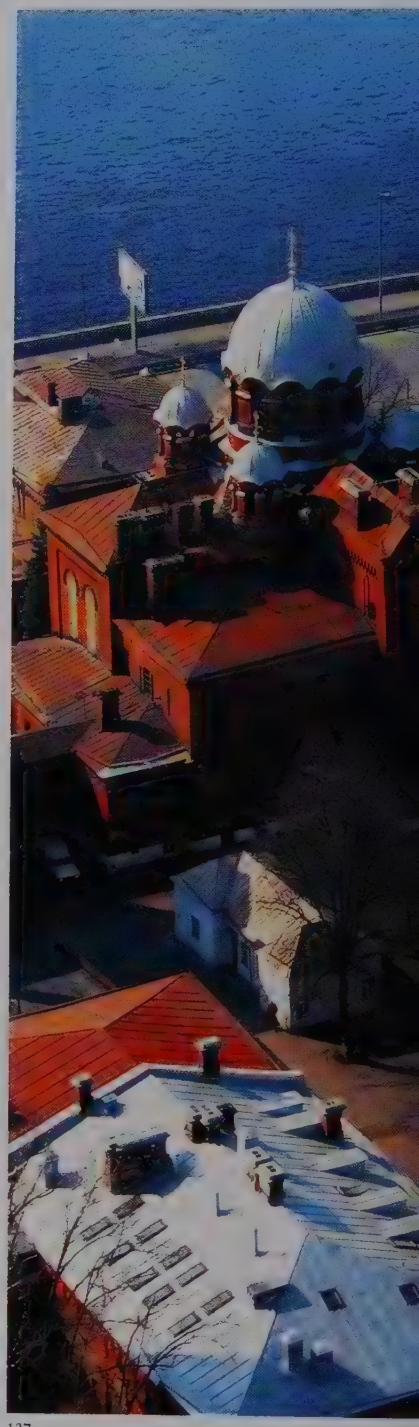

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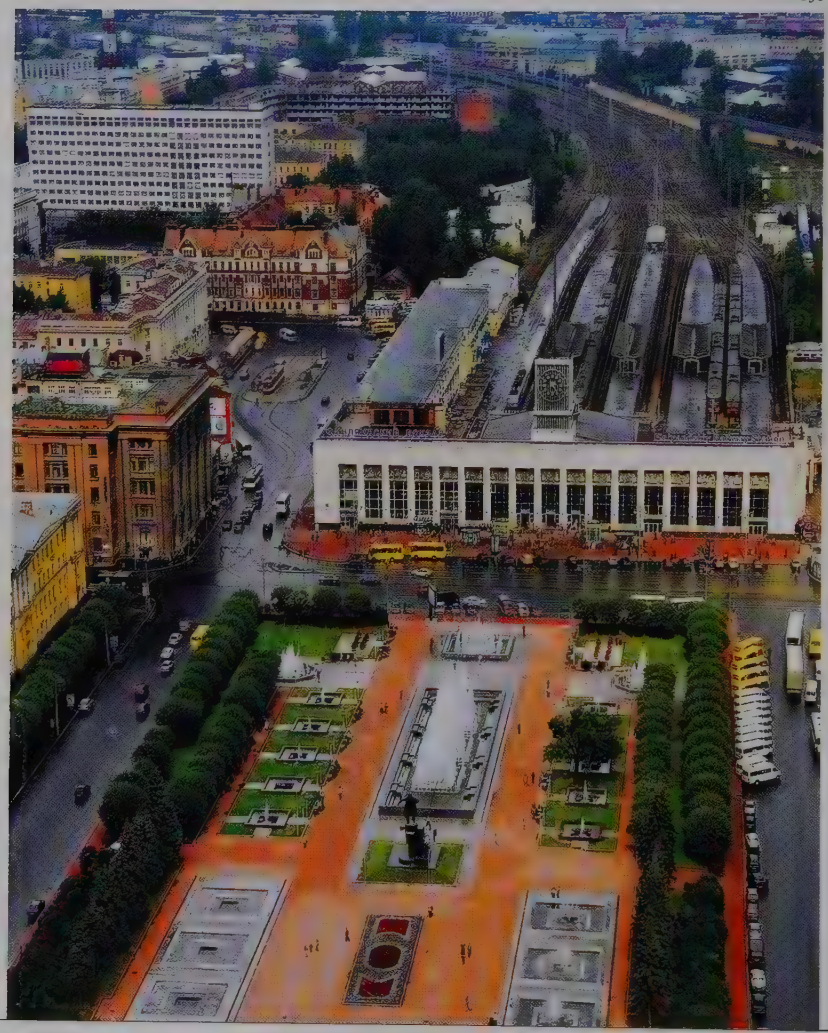

135. The Cathedral of St Sampsonius. 1728–40

136. Lenin Square. The Finland Station. 1965–69. Architects: Piotr Ashastin, Nikolai Baranov, Yakov Lukin

137. Arsenalnaya Embankment. A complex of buildings prisons ("Crosses"). 1890. Architect: Anton Tomishko

The Vyborg Side is an industrial region of St Petersburg. There are no luxurious architectural ensembles here similar to those of the downtown areas, but amidst ordinary houses and green parks one can notice now the columns of some Classical portico and now the curls of a Baroque cartouche. An ordinary look of Sampsonievsky Prospekt is enlivened by the Cathedral of St Sampsonius – a brilliant monument of Baroque architecture, constructed in memory of the historic Battle of Poltava. Austere expressiveness marks the cross-shaped block of a prison, nicknamed the "Crosses", on the Arsenalnaya Embankment. The crossing buildings of the prison serve as an example of thoroughly thought-out functionality. But its plan also implies the idea of atoning sins by prayer, revealed by the prison's neighbourhood with a church. Lenin Square with a strict volume of the Finland Station open to the river is an important element of the Neva panorama, a successful ensemble that has developed already in the twentieth century.

139

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141

←
138. View of the Smolny Convent and the Bolsheohtinsky Bridge

139, 140. The Smolny Convent. 1748–69. Architect: Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli

141. Smolny Institute. 1806–08. Architect: Giacomo Quarenghi

A bird's-eye view affords an insight into the plan of the great architect Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli, who created the amazing New Maiden (Smolny) Convent of the Resurrection with its magnificent building of the cathedral soaring to the sky and ornate, graceful auxiliary monastic buildings. It is a veritable masterpiece of Baroque architecture and the crowning accomplishment of Rastrelli, whose contribution to the adornment of St Petersburg cannot be overestimated. His outstanding achievements gave rise to a legend that Giacomo Quarenghi, another celebrated architect, passing by the Smolny Convent, always took off his hat, and he was a good judge of architecture! Nearby is Quarenghi's complex of the Smolny Institute, an educational institution for "girls of noble birth". The Smolny makes an austere and expressive whole with the propylaea in front of it. The Smolny Institute building has witnessed many historic events – it was within its walls that the victory of the Bolshevik armed revolt was proclaimed in October 1917. Nowadays the building functions as the residence of the Governor of St Petersburg and the Mayor's Office.

142

The Tauride Palace with the territory surrounding it, built for Prince Grigory Potemkin-Tavrichesky, a favourite of Empress Catherine the Great, is a brilliant example of nineteenth-century estate construction in St Petersburg. This complex, an architectural monument of world significance designed in the style of Classicism, served for many generations of Russian architects as a model of noble simplicity and stateliness. The Tauride Garden adjoining the palace ranks with the most poetical and picturesque places of St Petersburg.

Noise and bustle do not penetrate behind the gate of the St Alexander Nevsky Monastery. This monastic abode is the largest centre of Russian spiritual life, the Metropolitan's residence. Monastery cemeteries served as burial places for many outstanding figures of Russian culture and science. Among those interred here were the army commander Alexander Suvorov, the composer Piotr Tchaikovsky and the writer Fiodor Dostoyevsky. In the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity is kept the main sacred relic of St Petersburg – the holy remains of the St Prince Alexander Nevsky. A view from heavens

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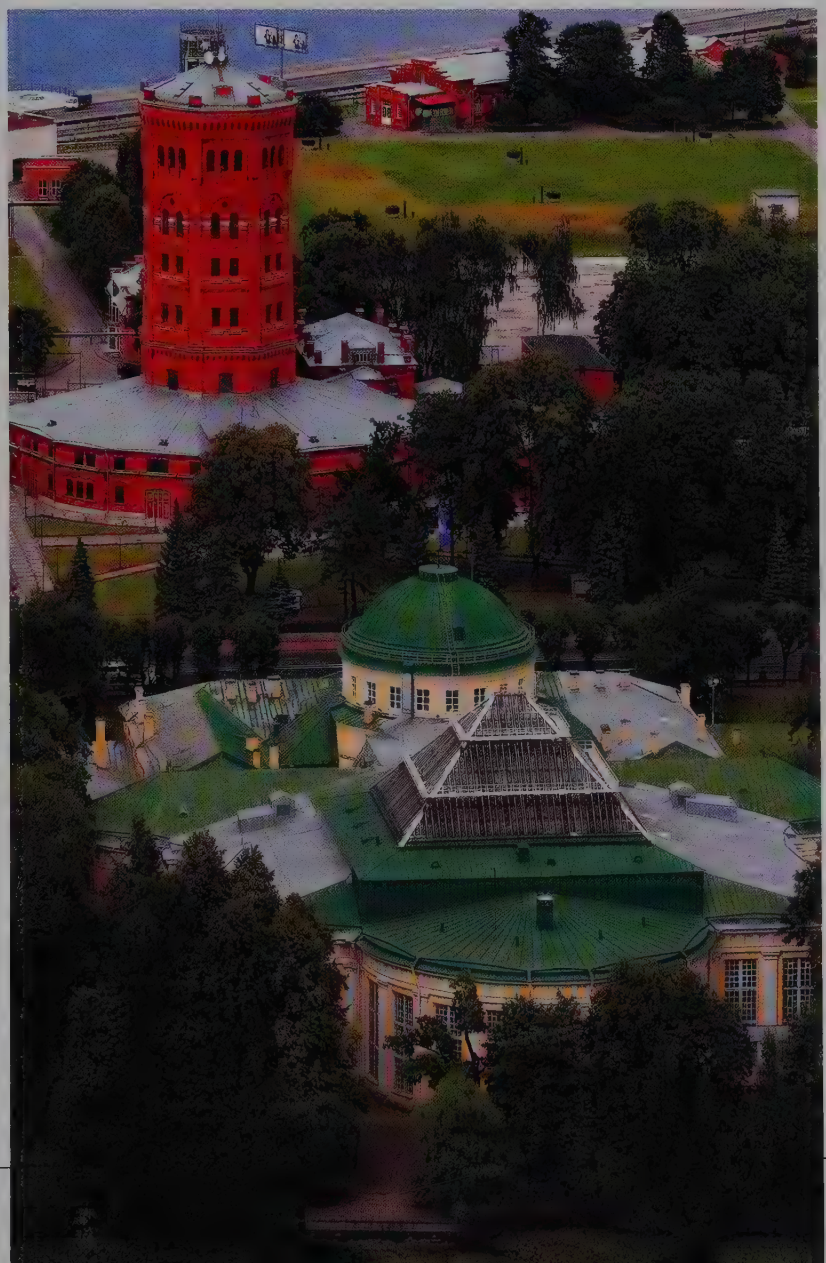
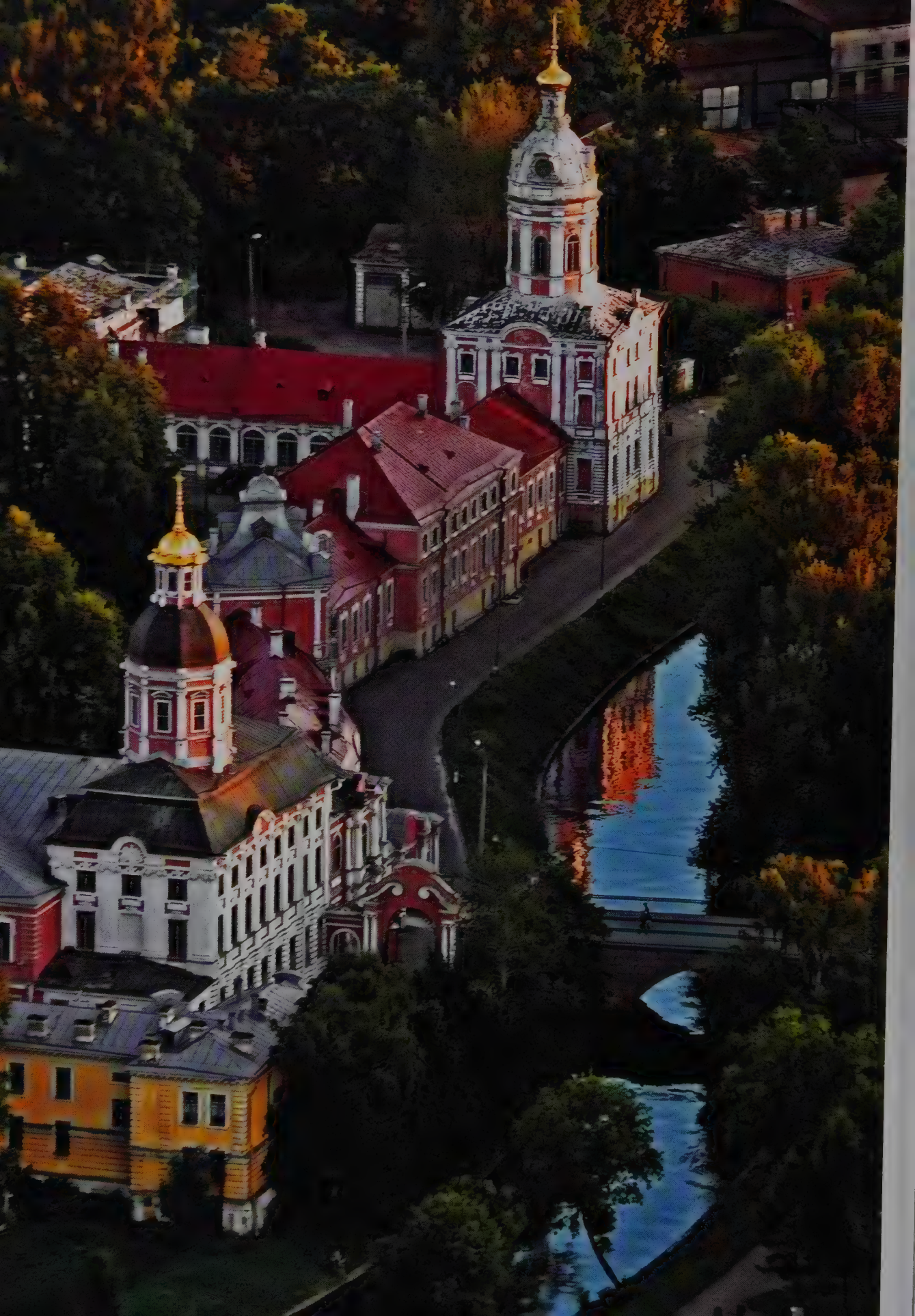


142. The Tauride Palace. 1783–89.
Architect: Ivan Starov

143. The "Big House" (4, Liteiny Prospekt).
1931–32. Architects: Noah Trotsky,
Alexander Gegello, Andrei Ol and others

144. View of the Tauride Palace
and the Water Tower



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unfolds all the greatness and harmony of the architectural complex. The commensurability of the dome of the cathedral and its bell-towers evokes a solemn mood. The still waters of the Monastyrka River reflect the two-coloured walls of monastic blocks, instilling elevated thoughts about eternity and the transitory character of human life.

145, 147. The St Alexander Nevsky Monastery. Founded in 1710

146. The St Alexander Nevsky Monastery. The Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. 1776–90. Architect: Ivan Starov

→
148. The Obvodny Canal

150

151

The straight Moskovsky Prospekt runs from north to south along the Pulkovo meridian. This busy thoroughfare, about 10 km long, links the city's centre with the airport and with the highways leading to Moscow and Kiev. This avenue is notable for the integrity and completeness of its architectural appearance. Its section behind the Obvodny

149. Moskovsky Prospekt.
The Moscow Triumphal Arch. 1828–29.
Architect: Vasily Stasov

150. Crossing of Moscow Prospekt,
Frunze and Pobedy Streets

151. The Vitebsk Station, the oldest in Russia. The present-day building of the station (1904, architect: Stanislaw Bržozowski) is one of the first public structures in the Art Nouveau style.

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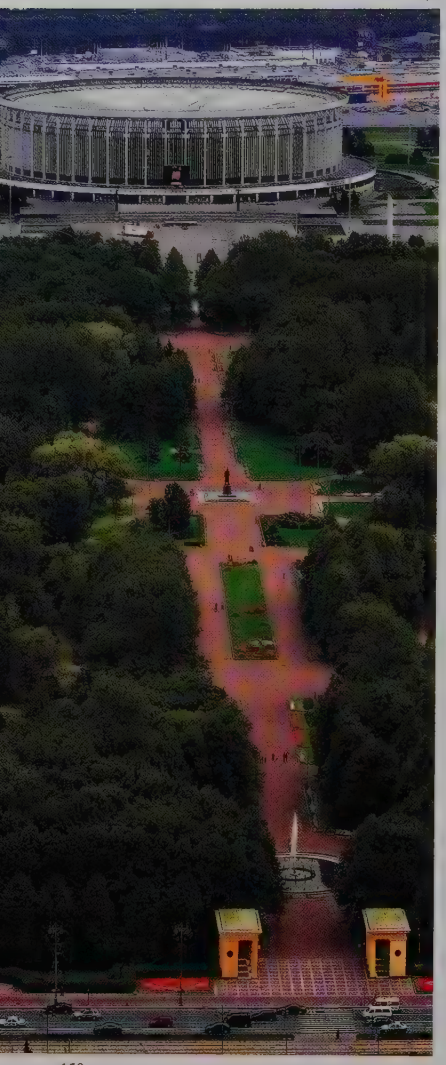

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Canal can be regarded as a successful town-planning project of the twentieth century, and it is noteworthy that the majority of buildings have been constructed here in postwar years. Many sights on Moscovsky Prospekt are associated with the military glory of Russia. The triumphal arch built in honour of Russia's victories in wars with Poland, Turkey and Persia in 1828–29 produces a particularly majestic impression from a height.

152. View of the Heroes Avenue in the Moskovsky Victory Park and the Sports and Concert Complex

153. Moskovskaya Square. The House of the Soviets. 1936–41. Architects: Noah Trotsky, Lev Tverskoy, Yakov Svirsky, Yakov Lukin. 1986–98. Architect: Vladimir Shcherbin

УНИВЕРМАГ МОСКОВСКИЙ

УНИВЕРМАГ МОСКОВСКИЙ

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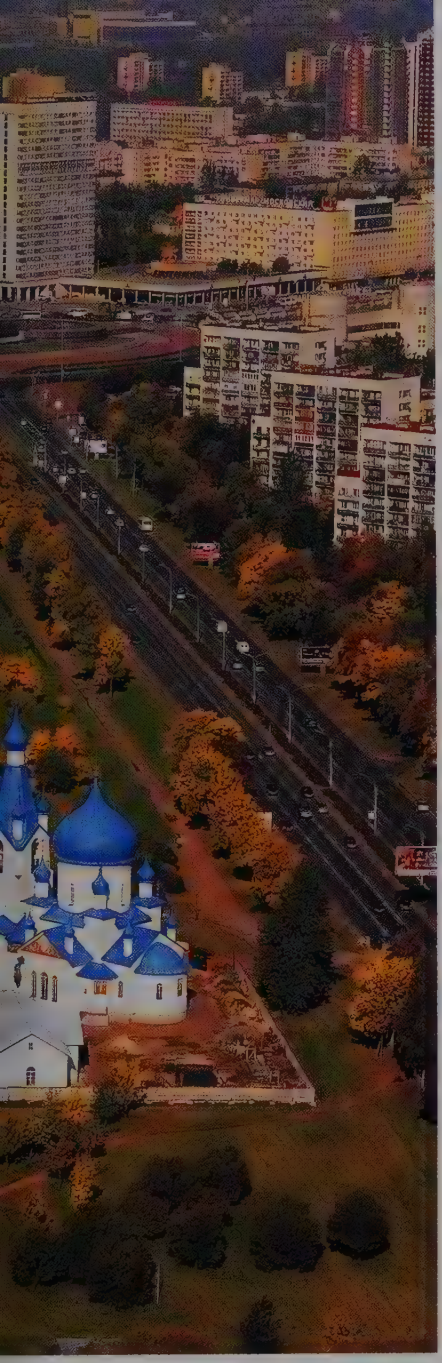
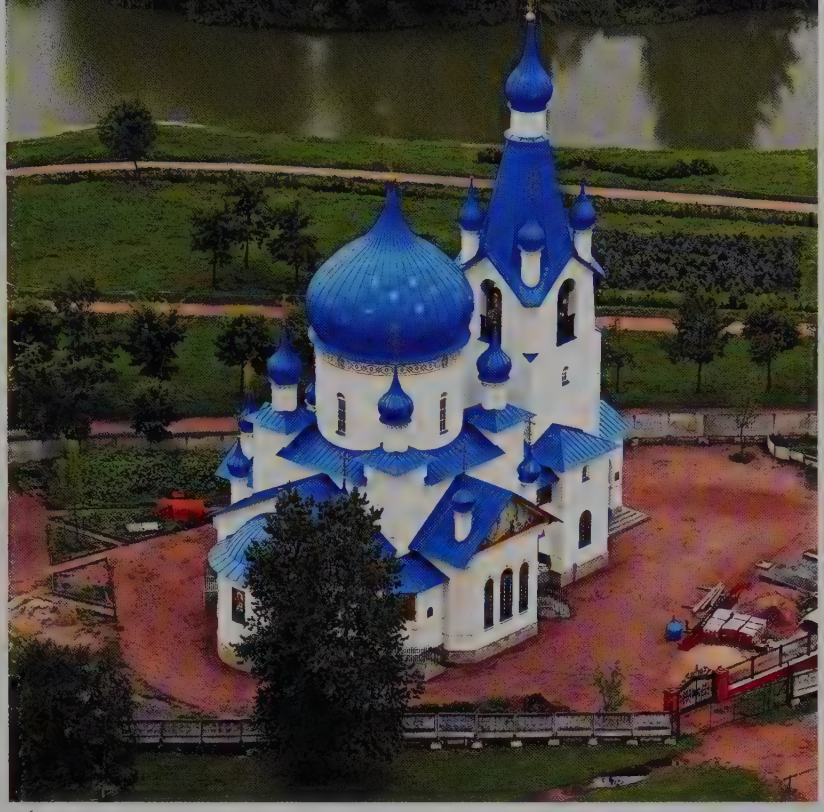
All the world knows about the feat of Leningrad during the Second World War. The city displayed heroic fortitude holding the line of defence encircled by enemy troops for 900 days, from September 1941 till January 1944. During this siege, unprecedented in the history of mankind, Leningraders, weakened by hunger and freezing in severe frosts, had to overcome hardships of living in a huge city without electricity and water supply. One million and two hundred thousand inhabitants of the city died in the besieged city, but it did not surrender. The memorial to the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad gives tribute to this great deed. Under an obelisk surrounded with sculptural groups, is situated the Memorial Hall where the tragic pages of history have been recreated. Not far from the monument, in the Middle Rogatka area, was put up a church consecrated to the holy martyr St George and dedicated to the feat of the Leningraders who perished in the War of 1941–45.

There was an old tradition in St Petersburg to commemorate army victories by the construction of new churches. The Church of the Nativity of St John the Baptist was put up in memory of the victorious battle of the Russian Fleet against the Turkish Navy near Chesme in 1770. This graceful building in the Gothic style is one of architectural wonders of the city.





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154. Victory Square. Monument to the Heroic Defenders of Leningrad. 1974–75. Architect: Sergei Speransky, sculptor: Mikhail Anikushin

155. A modern church complex in the Middle Rogatka area. Churches of the Nativity of Christ, St George and St Sergius of Radonezh

156. Church of the Nativity of Christ. 1999–2003. Architects: I. Liubarova, A. Lebedev

157. The Chesme Church (of St John the Baptist). 1777–80. Architect: Yury Velten

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The town of Pushkin (formerly named Tsarskoye Selo) in a suburb of St Petersburg, boasts one of the largest palace and park ensembles of Europe. Several generations of the Romanov imperial dynasty, from Catherine I, the consort of Peter the Great, to the last Russian Emperor Nicholas II, lived here. Tsarskoye Selo is inseparably associated with the great Russian

←
158, 161. Tsarskoye Selo.
The Catherine (Great) Palace. 1752–56.
Architect: Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli

159. The Catherine Park.
The Cameron Gallery. 1784–87.
Architect: Charles Cameron

160. The Catherine Park

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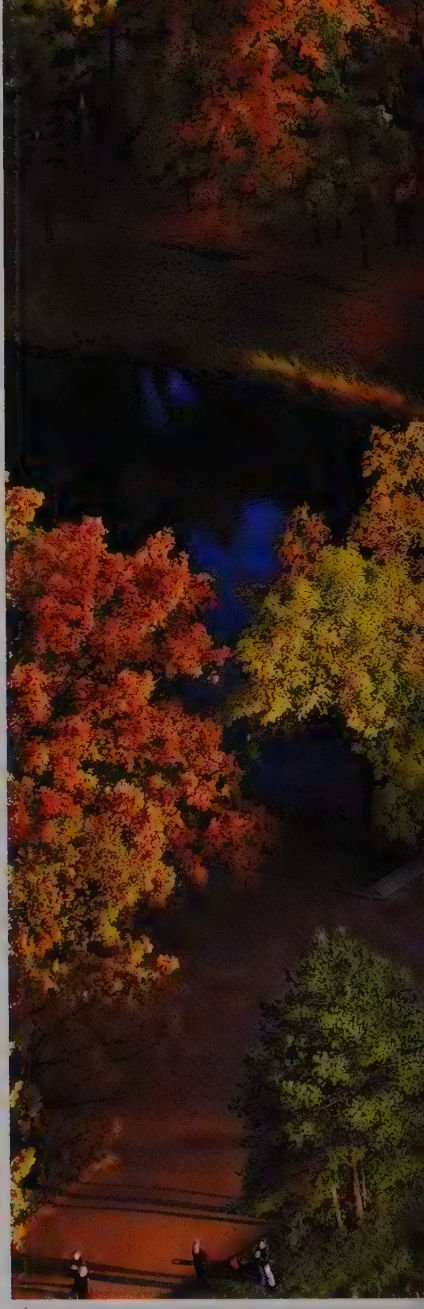

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poet Alexander Pushkin. He studied in the Imperial Lyceum at Tsarskoye Selo and glorified these places in his poems.

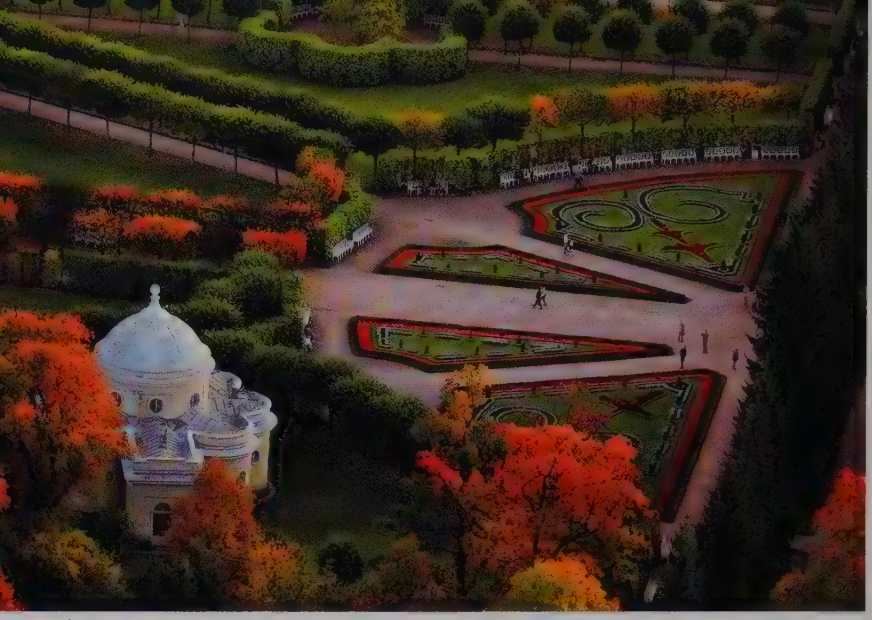
The Tsarskoye Selo complex includes the Catherine, Alexander, Babolovo and Separate Parks. They form a vast green area with a unified water system and an integrated network of roads and pedestrian avenues, which are especially well observed from above. Besides the magnificent Baroque Catherine Palace and the Alexander Palace designed in the strict

162. The Catherine Park.
The Chesme (Eagle) Column. 1774–76.
Architect: Antonio Rinaldi

163. The Catherine Park.
The Admiralty ("Holland"). 1773–77.
Architect: Vasily Neyelov

164. The Alexander Park.
The Alexander Palace. 1792–96.
Architect: Giacomo Quarenghi

164



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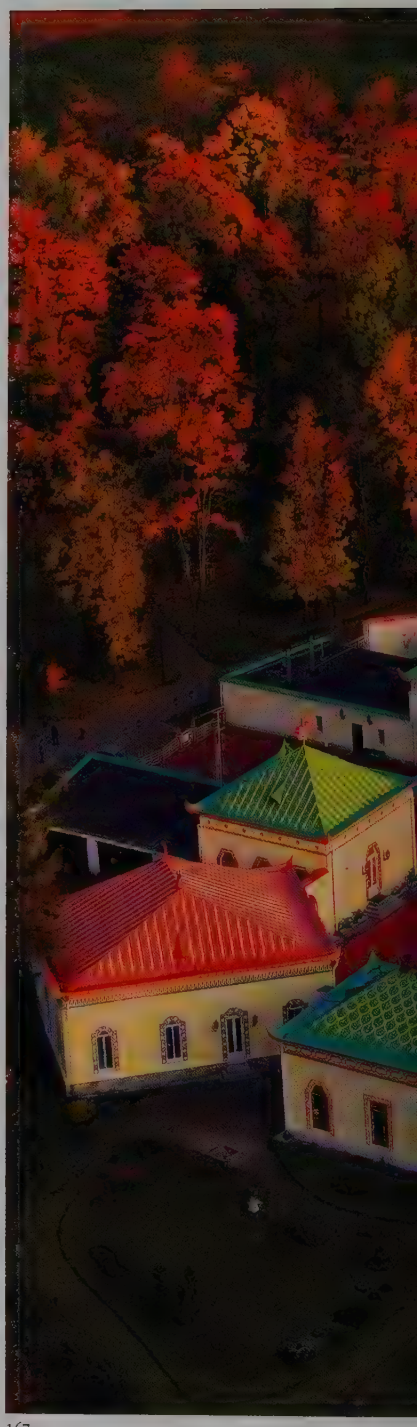

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165. The Catherine Park.
The Lower Bath Pavilion. 1778–79.
Architect: Vasily Neyelov

166. The Alexander Park. The Chinese Village. 1782–98. Architects: Antonio Rinaldi, Vasily Neyelov, Charles Cameron. 1817–22. Architect: Vasily Stasov

167. The Alexander Park. Chapelle. 1825–28. Architect: Adam Menelaws

→
168. The Catherine Park. The Great Pond

traditions of Classicism, the Tsarskoye Selo Museum-Preserve includes a large number of various auxiliary buildings. A view from the height at which birds fly makes it evident that all these structures, which were built in different periods in a variety of styles and whose creation was contributed by the best architects of Russia – Mikhail Zemtsov, Savva Chevakinsky, Bartolomeo Francesco Rastrelli, Charles Cameron, Antonio Rinaldi, Giacomo Quarenghi, Vasily Neyelov and Adam Menelaws – form an inseparable, harmonious ensemble. The focus of the Tsarskoye Selo complex is the magnificent Baroque Catherine Palace, remarkable for the unusually whimsical decoration of its façades, the regal light of its blue walls and the shining of its golden domes. A view from above reveals the grand scale of the palace and park complex and invites you to enjoy unhurried promenades along the avenues of its fine gardens.

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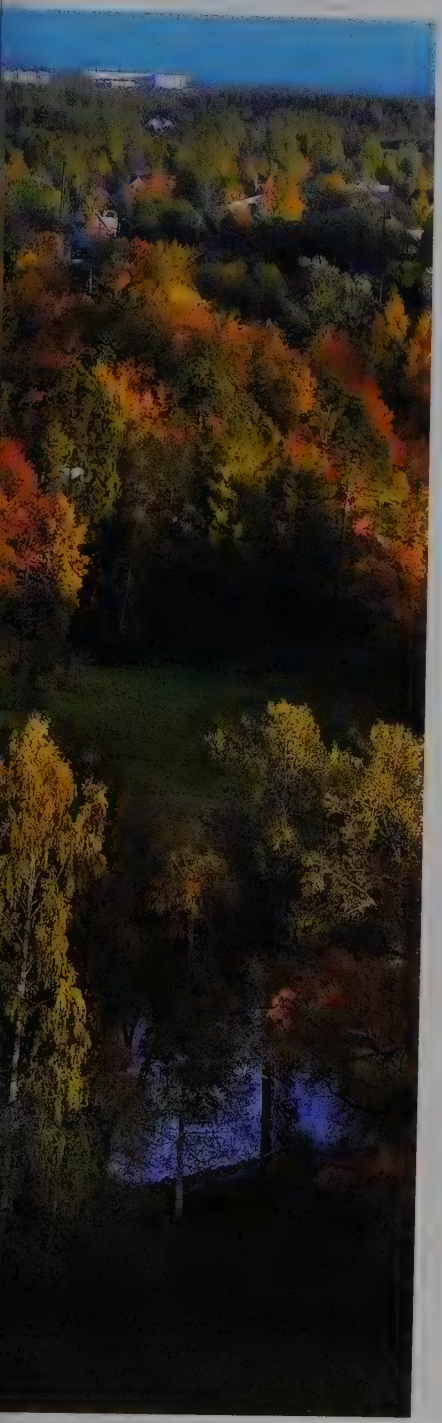
Pavlovsk has long since become a favourite vacation spot for many Petersburgers. Its palace and park ensemble developed for about fifty years starting from 1777. This tract of land, located a little south of Tsarskoye Selo on the banks of the Slavianka River, was presented by Catherine the Great to her son Pavel and his wife Maria Fiodorovna for building a country summer residence.

The extraordinarily picturesque Pavlovsk Park, designed in a landscape style, is one of the most beautiful in the world. Many well-known architects, sculptors and master gardeners took part in the decoration of the palace, the development of landscape compositions, the arrangement of trees and flowers, the improvement of water reservoirs and the creation of decorative statues and pavilions. The Pavlovsk Palace is one of the highest achievements of Russian architecture and art of interior decoration in the age of Classicism, and its magnificent park pavilions are truly unique. A bird's-eye view allows one to appreciate all the grandeur and originality of the Pavlovsk project.



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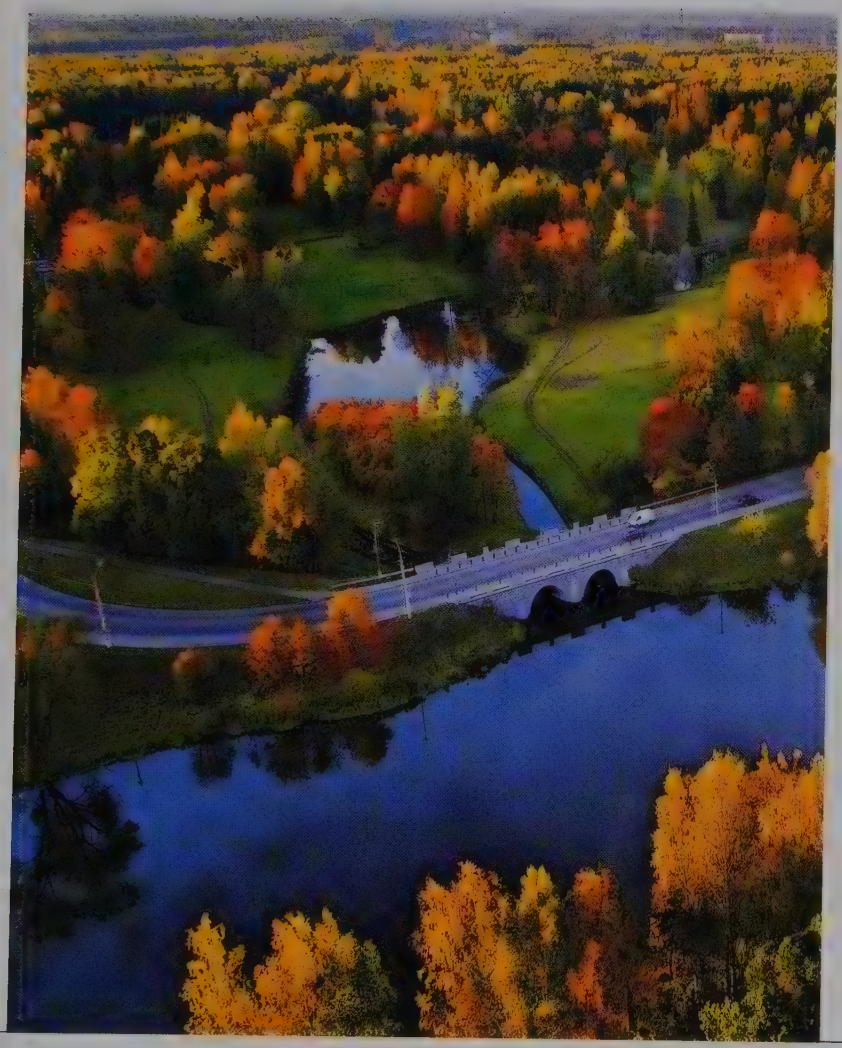

169. Pavlovsk. View of on a palace and a valley of the Slavianka River

170. The palace. 1782–25. Architects: Charles Cameron, Vincenzo Brenna and others

171. Golden autumn at Pavlovsk

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This brilliant museum-preserve, known all over the world for its fascinating fountains, is located 20 kilometres from St Petersburg. Creating a country residence at Peterhof, Peter the Great dreamt of surprising Europe with a sweep of his plan and a luxury of its embodiment, and he succeeded in doing that. In the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries amazingly beautiful, palace structures and a technically unique and perfect system of fountains emerged in this area. The regularly planned Upper Park serves as the main approach to the Tsar's Peterhof residence from the St Petersburg highway. The Lower Park is an extremely fine "frame" of the palace from the sea. But only on rising upwards and seeing both gardens simultaneously from above it is possible to understand their interrelation and get an insight into the architectural plan of Peterhof as a whole.

←
172. Peterhof. View of on the Great Cascade and the Great Palace

173. Panoramic view of the central part of the ensemble

174. The Great Palace. The Armorial Block. Finial

175. The Upper Park

174

175

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176. Peterhof. The Lower Park
near the Marly Palace

177. Oranienbaum.
The Coasting Hill Pavilion. 1762–74.
Architect: Antonio Rinaldi

178. Oranienbaum.
The Great (Menshikov) Palace
and the regular part of park

Oranienbaum, one of the earliest suburban palace and park ensembles, lies on the southern coast of the Gulf of Finland, 40 km from St Petersburg. It has survived in a better state than all other imperial residences outside St Petersburg because during the war Soviet soldiers repulsed all attacks of Nazi aggressors at the Oranienbaum "patch of land". The Oranienbaum estate belonged to Alexander Menshikov, an associate of Peter the Great, who began intense construction work on it. After Menshikov had been removed of power these lands repeatedly changed their owners – the palace was altered, the appearance of gardens and parks was improved and new structures began to appear in them. The central building of the complex was erected on a natural elevation, affording a pleasant view of the Gulf of Finland and picturesque neighbouring landscapes. Panoramic scope conveys well the charming orderliness of the old regular garden of Oranienbaum.

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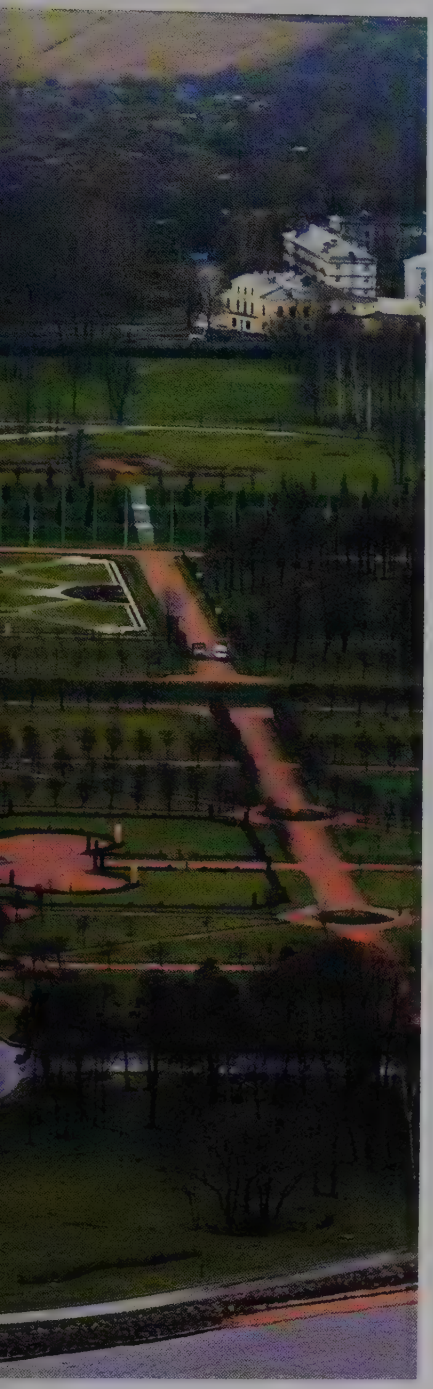
From the height of a bird's flight you can appreciate the faultless layout of the "Palace of Congresses" state complex – the suburban residence of the President of the Russian Federation. It is located at Strelna, 19 km from St Petersburg, on the shore of the Gulf of Finland. Among previous owners of this territory were Grand Dukes Konstantin Pavlovich, son of Paul I, Konstantin Nikolayevich, son of Nicholas I, and Konstantin Konstantinovich, his grandson. This brilliant suburban area of the northern capital suffered badly during the war; later for a long time the Konstantinovsky Palace housed the Leningrad Arctic School. Nowadays the palace, pavilions, ponds, canals and the park have been recreated to their historical appearance. Twenty two-storeyed cottages for the reception of visitors in the "consular village" were designed by modern architects.

An observation of Strelna from above strikes the viewer by the majestic grandeur of the architectural ensemble of the Konstantinovsky Palace and the landscape composition of the park both from the Upper Peterhof Road and from the sea.



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179. Strelna. The Konstantinovsky Palace. 1720–30. Architect: Niccolo Michetti. Partly reconstructed in 1847–51. Restored in 2001–03

180. Cottages for visitors

181. The Palace of Congresses state complex

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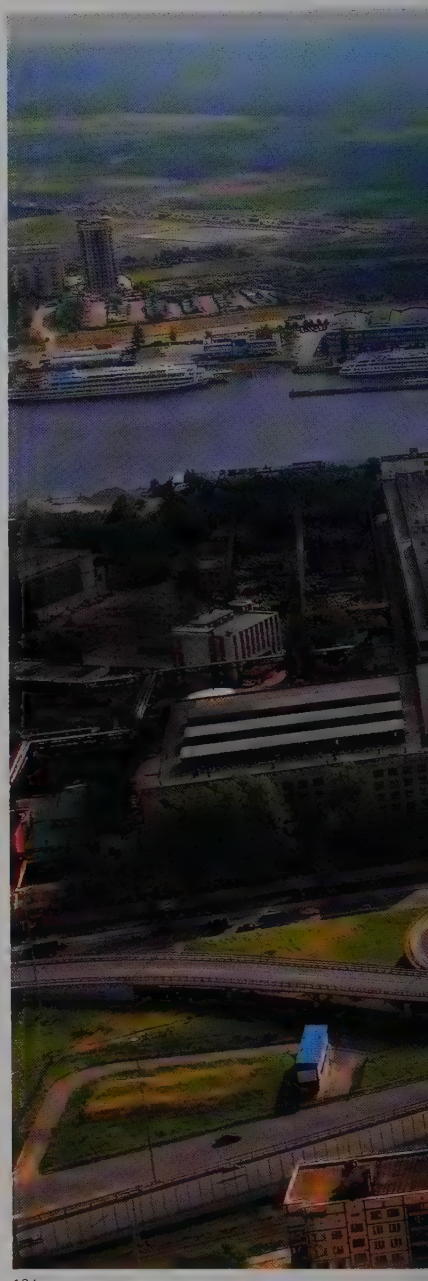

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182. Buildings of the sea passenger terminal on Vasilyevsky Island

183. Vasilyevsky Island. The Sea Passenger Terminal

184. The suspension Large Obukhovsky Bridge and a traffic intersection on the left bank of the Neva

→

185. Passenger vessels at the English Embankment. View of the Annunciation Bridge and the Admiralty Shipyards

→ →

186. Panoramic view of the Neva and the riverside areas of St Petersburg

It is possible to treat differently new construction projects of St Petersburg, but its basic achievements are indubitable – the establishment of residential areas within green zones, an absence of courtyards looking like wells and a comfortable development of territories within blocks. Let us visit some new residential districts of St Petersburg...

Nine bridges span the banks of the Neva. The youngest of them is the suspension Large Obukhovsky Bridge, which has been opened for transport in 2005. It is the highest bridge in St Petersburg. The large dimensions allow ships to pass under the bridge during navigation without raising its central section. The complex of this river crossing includes traffic intersections, overpasses, an embankment on the right bank of the Neva and the central way. The name of the bridge was suggested by townspeople – it won a competition with 179 versions. From above the bridge looks like a huge harp and its durable slender cables resemble strings of this musical instrument.

Peter the Great dreamt of creating a fascinating sea façade even during the foundation of St Petersburg. And nowadays versions of construction in the seaside part of the northern capital are thoroughly considered so as to conform to the best architectural traditions of the city that is often named an open-air museum. And St Petersburg – changing, growing and beautiful – is a museum indeed!

DELPHIN

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